

THE
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Philip.

CHAPTER XIII.

LOVE ME LOVE MY DOG.



HILST the battle is raging, the old folks and ladies peep over the battlements, to watch the turns of the combat, and the behaviour of the knights. To princesses in old days, whose lovely hands were to be bestowed upon the conqueror, it must have been a matter of no small interest to know whether the slim young champion with the lovely eyes on the milk-white steed should vanquish, or the dumpy, elderly, square-shouldered, squinting, carotty whiskerando of a warrior who was laying about him so savagely; and so in this battle, on the issue of which depended

the keeping or losing of poor

Philip's inheritance, there were several non-combatants deeply interested. Or suppose we withdraw the chivalrous simile (as in fact the conduct and views of certain parties engaged in the matter were anything but what we call chivalrous), and imagine a wily old monkey who engages a cat to take certain chestnuts out of the fire, and pussy putting her paw through the bars, seizing the nut and then dropping it? Jacko is disappointed and angry, shows his sharp teeth, and bites if he dares. When the

attorney went down to do battle for Philip's patrimony, some of those who wanted it were spectators of the fight, and lurking up a tree hard by. When Mr. Bond came forward to try and seize Phil's chesnuts, there was a wily old monkey who thrust the cat's paw out, and proposed to gobble up the smoking prize.

If you have ever been at the "Admiral Byng," you know, my dear madam, that the parlour where the club meets is just behind Mrs. Oves's bar, so that by lifting up the sash of the window which communicates between the two apartments, that good-natured woman may put her face into the club-room, and actually be one of the society. Sometimes for company, old Mr. Ridley goes and sits with Mrs. O—— in her bar, and reads the paper there. He is slow at his reading. The long words puzzle the worthy gentleman. As he has plenty of time to spare, he does not grudge it to the study of his paper.

On the day when Mr. Bond went to persuade Mrs. Brandon in Thornhaugh Street to claim Dr. Firmin for her husband, and to disinherit poor Philip, a little gentleman wrapt most solemnly and mysteriously in a great cloak appeared at the bar of the "Admiral Byng," and said in an aristocratic manner, "You have a parlour, show me to it." And being introduced to the parlour (where there are fine pictures of Oves, Mrs. O——, and Spotty-nose, their favourite defunct bull-dog), sat down and called for a glass of sherry and a newspaper.

The civil and intelligent potboy of the "Byng" took the party *The Advertiser* of yesterday (which to-day's paper was in'and), and when the gentleman began to swear over the old paper, Frederick gave it as his opinion to his mistress that the new comer was a arbitrary gent,—as, indeed, he was, with the omission, perhaps, of a single letter; a man who bullied everybody who would submit to be bullied. In fact, it was our friend Talbot Twysden, Esq., Commissioner of the Powder and Pomatum Office; and I leave those who know him to say whether he is arbitrary or not.

To him presently came that bland old gentleman, Mr. Bond, who also asked for a parlour and some sherry and water; and this is how Philip and his veracious and astute biographer came to know for a certainty that dear uncle Talbot was the person who wished to—to have Philip's chesnuts.

Mr. Bond and Mr. Twysden had been scarcely a minute together, when such a storm of imprecations came clattering through the glass-window which communicates with Mrs. Oves's bar, that I daresay they made the jugs and tumblers clatter on the shelves, and Mr. Ridley, a very modest-spoken man, reading his paper, lay it down with a scared face, and say—"Well, I never." Nor did he often, I dare to say.

This volley was fired by Talbot Twysden, in consequence of his rage at the news which Mr. Bond brought him.

"Well, Mr. Bond; well, Mr. Bond! What does she say?" he asked of his emissary.

"She will have nothing to do with the business, Mr. Twysden. We can't touch it; and I don't see how we can move her. She denies the marriage as much as Firmin does: says she knew it was a mere sham when the ceremony was performed."

"Sir, you didn't bribe her enough," shrieked Mr. Twysden. "You have bungled this business; by George you have, sir."

"Go and do it yourself, sir, if you are not ashamed to appear in it," says the lawyer. "You don't suppose I did it because I liked it; or want to take that poor young fellow's inheritance from him, as you do?"

"I wish justice and the law, sir. If I were wrongfully detaining his property I would give it up. I would be the first to give it up. I desire justice and law, and employ you because you are a law agent. Are you not?"

"And I have been on your errand, and shall send in my bill in due time; and there will be an end of my connexion with you as your law agent, Mr. Twysden," cried the old lawyer.

"You know, sir, how badly Firmin acted to me in the last matter."

"Faith, sir, if you ask my opinion as a law agent, I don't think there was much to choose between you. How much is the sherry and water?—keep the change. Sorry I'd no better news to bring you, Mr. T., and as you are dissatisfied, again recommend you to employ another law agent."

"My good sir, I——"

"My good sir, I have had other dealings with your family, and am no more going to put up with your highti-tightness than I would with Lord Ringwood's, when I was one of *his* law agents. I am not going to tell Mr. Philip Firmin that his uncle and aunt propose to ease him of his property; but if anybody else does—that good little Mrs. Brandon—or that old goose Mr. Whatdyecallum, her father—I don't suppose he will be over well pleased. I am speaking as a gentleman now, not as a law agent. You and your nephew had each a half share of Mr. Philip Firmin's grandfather's property, and you wanted it all, that's the truth, and set a law agent to get it for you; and swore at him because he could not get it from its right owner. And so, sir, I wish you a good morning, and recommend you to take your papers to some other agent, Mr. Twysden." And with this, *exit* Mr. Bond. And now, I ask you, if that secret could be kept which was known through a trembling glass-door to Mrs. Oves of the "Admiral Byng," and to Mr. Ridley the father of J. J., and the obsequious husband of Mrs. Ridley? On that very afternoon, at tea-time, Mrs. Ridley was made acquainted by her husband (in his noble and circumlocutory manner) with the conversation which he had overheard. It was agreed that an embassy should be sent to J. J. on the business, and his advice taken regarding it; and J. J.'s opinion was that the conversation certainly should be reported to Mr. Philip Firmin, who might afterwards act upon it as he should think best.

What? His own aunt, cousins, and uncle agreed in a scheme to overthrow his legitimacy, and deprive him of his grandfather's inheritance?

It seemed impossible. Big with the tremendous news, Philip came to his adviser, Mr. Pendennis, of the Temple, and told him what had occurred on the part of father, uncle, and Little Sister. Her abnegation had been so noble, that you may be sure Philip appreciated it; and a tie of friendship was formed between the young man and the little lady even more close and tender than that which had bound them previously. But the Twysdens, his kinsfolk, to employ a lawyer in order to rob him of his inheritance!—Oh, it was dastardly! Philip bawled and stamped, and thumped his sense of the wrong in his usual energetic manner. As for his cousin Ringwood Twysden, Phil had often entertained a strong desire to wring his neck and pitch him downstairs. As for uncle Talbot: that he is an old pump, that he is a pompous old humbug, and the queerest old sycophant, I grant you; but I couldn't have believed him guilty of this. And as for the girls—oh, Mrs. Pendennis, you who are good, you who are kind, although you hate them, I know you do—you can't say, you won't say, that they were in the conspiracy?

"But suppose Twysden was asking only for what he conceives to be his rights?" asked Mr. Pendennis. "Had your father been married to Mrs. Brandon, you would not have been Dr. Firmin's legitimate son. Had you not been his legitimate son, you had no right to a half-share of your grandfather's property. Uncle Talbot acts only the part of honour and justice in the transaction. He is Brutus, and he orders you off to death, with a bleeding heart."

"And he orders his family out of the way," roars Phil, "so that they mayn't be pained by seeing the execution! I see it all now. I wish somebody would send a knife through me at once, and put an end to me. I see it all now. Do you know that for the last week I have been to Beaunash Street, and found nobody? Agnes had the bronchitis, and her mother was attending to her; Blanche came for a minute or two, and was as cool—as cool as I have seen Lady Iceberg be cool to her. Then they must go away for change of air. They have been gone these three days: whilst uncle Talbot and that viper of a Ringwood have been closeted with their nice new friend, Mr. Hunt. O conf——! I beg your pardon, ma'am; but I know you always allow for the energy of my language."

"I should like to see that Little Sister, Mr. Firmin. She has not been selfish, or had any scheme but for your good," remarks my wife.

"A little angel who drops her h's—a little heart, so good and tender that I melt as I think of it," says Philip, drawing his big hand over his eyes. "What have men done to get the love of some women? We don't earn it; we don't deserve it, perhaps. We don't return it. They bestow it on us. I have given nothing back for all this love and kindness, but I look a little like my father of old days, for whom—for whom she had an attachment. And see now how she would die to serve me! You are wonderful, women are! your fidelities and your ficklenesses alike marvellous. What can any woman have found to adore in the doctor? Do you think my father could ever have been adorable, Mrs. Pendennis?

And yet I have heard my poor mother say she was obliged to marry him. She knew it was a bad match, but she couldn't resist it. In what was my father so irresistible? He is not to *my* taste. Between ourselves, I think he is a—well, never mind what."

"I think we had best not mind what?" says my wife, with a smile.

"Quite right—quite right; only I blurt out everything that is on my mind. Can't keep it in," cries Phil, gnawing his mustachios. "If my fortune depended on my silence I should be a beggar, that's the fact. And, you see, if you had such a father as mine, you yourself would find it rather difficult to hold your tongue about him. But now, tell me: this ordering away of the girls and aunt Twysden, whilst the little attack upon my property is being carried on—isn't it queer?"

"The question is at an end," said Mr. Pendennis. "You are restored to your *atavis regibus* and ancestral honours. Now that uncle Twysden can't get the property without you; have courage, my boy—he may take it, along with the encumbrance."

Poor Phil had not known—but some of us, who are pretty clear-sighted when our noble selves are not concerned, had perceived that Philip's dear aunt was playing fast and loose with the lad, and when his back was turned was encouraging a richer suitor for her daughter.

Hand on heart I can say of my wife, that she meddles with her neighbours as little as any person I ever knew; but when treacheries in love affairs are in question, she fires up at once, and would persecute to death almost the heartless male or female criminal who would break love's sacred laws. The idea of a man or woman trifling with that holy compact awakens in her a flame of indignation. In curtain confidences (of which let me not vulgarize the *arcana*), she had given me her mind about some of Miss Twysden's behaviour with that odious blackamoor, as she chose to call Captain Woolcomb, who, I own, had a very slight tinge of complexion; and when, quoting the words of Hamlet regarding his father and mother, I asked, "Could she on this fair mountain leave to feed, and batten on this Moor?" Mrs. Pendennis cried out that this matter was all too serious for jest, and wondered how her husband could make word-plays about it. Perhaps she has not the exquisite sense of humour possessed by some folks; or is it that she has more reverence? In her creed, if not in her church, marriage is a sacrament; and the fond believer never speaks of it without awe.

Now, as she expects both parties to the marriage engagement to keep that compact holy, she no more understands trifling with it than she could comprehend laughing and joking in a church. She has no patience with flirtations as they are called. "Don't tell me, sir," says the enthusiast, "a light word between a man and a married woman ought not to be permitted." And this is why she is harder on the woman than the man, in cases where such dismal matters happen to fall under discussion. A look, a word from a woman, she says, will check a libertine thought or word in a man; and these cases might be stopped at once if the woman but showed the slightest resolution. She is thus more angry

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(I am only mentioning the peculiarities, not defending the ethics of this individual moralist)—she is, I say, more angrily disposed towards the woman than the man in such delicate cases; and, I am afraid, considers that women are for the most part only victims because they choose to be so.

Now, we had happened during this season to be at several entertainments, routs, and so forth, where poor Phil, owing to his unhappy Bohemian preferences and love of tobacco, &c., was not present—and where we saw Miss Agnes Twysden carrying on such a game with the tawny Woolcomb, as set Mrs. Laura in a tremor of indignation. What though Agnes's blue-eyed mamma sat near her blue-eyed daughter and kept her keen clear orbs perfectly wide open and cognizant of all that happened? So much the worse for her, the worse for both. It was a shame and a sin that a Christian English mother should suffer her daughter to deal lightly with the most holy, the most awful of human contracts; should be preparing her child who knows for what after misery of mind and soul. Three months ago, you saw how she encouraged poor Philip, and now see her with this mulatto!

"Is he not a man, and a brother, my dear?" perhaps at this Mr. Pendennis interposes.

"Oh, for shame, Pen, no levity on this—no sneers and laughter on this the most sacred subject of all." And here, I daresay, the woman fails to caressing her own children and hugging them to her heart as her manner was when moved. *Que voulez vous?* There are some women in the world to whom love and truth are all in all here below. Other ladies there are who see the benefit of a good jointure, a town and country house, and so forth, and who are not so very particular as to the character, intellect, or complexion of gentlemen who are in a position to offer their dear girls these benefits. In fine, I say that regarding this blue-eyed mother and daughter, Mrs. Laura Pendennis was in such a state of mind, that she was ready to tear their blue eyes out.

Nay, it was with no little difficulty that Mrs. Laura could be induced to hold her tongue upon the matter and not give Philip her opinion. "What?" she would ask, "the poor young man is to be deceived and cajoled; to be taken or left as it suits these people; to be made miserable for life certainly if she marries him; and his friends are not to dare to warn him? The cowards! The cowardice of you men, Pen, upon matters of opinion, of you masters and lords of creation, is really despicable, sir! You dare not have opinions, or holding them you dare not declare them, and act by them. You compromise with crime every day because you think it would be officious to declare yourself and interfere. You are not afraid of outraging morals, but of inflicting *ennui* upon society, and losing your popularity. You are as cynical as—as, what was the name of the horrid old man who lived in the tub—Demosthenes?—well, Diogenes, then, and the name does not matter a pin, sir. You are as cynical, only you wear fine ruffled shirts and wristbands, and you carry your lantern dark.

It is not right to 'put your oar in' as you say in your jargon (and even your slang is a sort of cowardice, sir, for you are afraid to speak the feelings of your heart:—) it is not right to meddle and speak the truth, not right to rescue a poor soul who is drowning—of course not. What call have you fine gentlemen of the world to put your oar in? Let him perish! What did he in that galley? That is the language of the world, baby darling. And, my poor, poor child, when you are sinking, nobody is to stretch out a hand to save you!" As for that wife of mine, when she sets forth the maternal plea, and appeals to the exuberant school of philosophers, I know there is no reasoning with her. I retire to my books, and leave her to kiss out the rest of the argument over the children.

Philip did not know the extent of the obligation which he owed to his little friend and guardian, Caroline; but he was aware that he had no better friend than herself in the world; and, I daresay, returned to her, as the wont is in such bargains between man and woman—woman and man, at least—a sixpence for that pure gold treasure, her sovereign affection. I suppose Caroline thought her sacrifice gave her a little authority to counsel Philip; for she it was who, I believe, first bid him to inquire whether that engagement which he had virtually contracted with his cousin was likely to lead to good, and was to be binding upon him but not on her? She brought Ridley to add his doubts to her remonstrances. She showed Philip that not only his uncle's conduct, but his cousin's, was interested, and set him to inquire into it further.

That peculiar form of bronchitis under which poor dear Agnes was suffering was relieved by absence from London. The smoke, the crowded parties and assemblies, the late hours, and, perhaps, the gloom of the house in Beaunash Street, distressed the poor dear child; and her cough was very much soothed by that fine, cutting east wind, which blows so liberally along the Brighton cliffs, and which is so good for coughs, as we all know. But there was one fault in Brighton which could not be helped in her bad case: it is too near London. The air, that chartered libertine, can blow down from London quite easily; or people can come from London to Brighton, bringing, I daresay, the insidious London fog along with them. At any rate, Agnes, if she wished for quiet, poor thing, might have gone farther and fared better. Why, if you owe a tailor a bill, he can run down and present it in a few hours. Vulgar, inconvenient acquaintances thrust themselves upon you at every moment and corner. Was ever such a *tohubohu* of people as there assembles? You can't be tranquil, if you will. Organs pipe and scream without cease at your windows. Your name is put down in the papers when you arrive; and everybody meets everybody ever so many times a day.

On finding that his uncle had set lawyers to work, with the charitable purpose of ascertaining whether Philip's property was legitimately his own, Philip was a good deal disturbed in mind. He could not appreciate that high sense of moral obligation by which Mr. Twysden was actuated. At least, he thought that these inquiries should not have been secretly set

a-foot; and as he himself was perfectly open—a great deal too open, perhaps—in his words and his actions, he was hard with those who attempted to hoodwink or deceive him.

It could not be; ah! no, it never could be, that Agnes the pure and gentle was privy to this conspiracy. But then, how very—very often of late she had been from home; how very, very cold aunt Twysden's shoulder had somehow become. Once, when he reached the door, a fishmonger's boy was leaving a fine salmon at the kitchen,—a salmon and a tub of ice. Once, twice, at five o'clock, when he called, a smell of cooking pervaded the hall,—that hall which culinary odours very seldom visited. Some of those noble Twysden dinners were on the *tapis*, and Philip was not asked. Not to be asked was no great deprivation; but who were the guests? To be sure, these were trifles light as air; but Philip smelt mischief in the steam of those Twysden dinners. He chewed that salmon with a bitter sauce as he saw it sink down the area steps (and disappear with its attendant lobster) in the dark kitchen regions.

Yes; eyes were somehow averted that used to look into his very frankly; a glove somehow had grown over a little hand which once used to lie very comfortably in his broad palm. Was anybody else going to seize it, and was it going to paddle in that blackamoor's unblest fingers? Ah! fiends and tortures! a gentleman may cease to love, but does he like a woman to cease to love him? People carry on ever so long for fear of that declaration that all is over. No confession is more dismal to make. The sun of love has set. We sit in the dark. I mean you, dear madam, and Corydon, or I and Amaryllis; uncomfortably, with nothing more to say to one another; with the night dew falling, and a risk of catching cold, drearily contemplating the fading west, with "the cold remains of lustre gone, of fire long past away." Sink, fire of love! Rise, gentle moon, and mists of chilly evening. And, my good Madam Amaryllis, let us go home to some tea and a fire.

So Philip determined to go and seek his cousin. Arrived at his hotel, (and if it were the * * I can't conceive Philip in much better quarters), he had the opportunity of inspecting those delightful newspaper arrivals, a perusal of which has so often edified us at Brighton. Mr. and Mrs. Penfold, he was informed, continued their residence, No. 96, Horizontal Place; and it was with those guardians he knew his Agnes was staying. He speeds to Horizontal Place. Miss Twysden is out. He heaves a sigh, and leaves a card. Has it ever happened to you to leave a card at *that* house—that house which was once THE house—almost your own; where you were ever welcome; where the kindest hand was ready to grasp yours, the brightest eye to greet you? And now your friendship has dwindled away to a little bit of pasteboard, shed once a year, and poor dear Mrs. Jones (it is with J. you have quarrelled) still calls on the ladies of your family and slips her husband's ticket upon the hall table. O life and time, that it should have come to this! O gracious powers! Do you recal the time when Arabella Briggs was Arabella Thompson?

You call and talk *fudaises* to her (at first she is rather nervous, and has the children in); you talk rain and fine weather; the last novel; the next party; Thompson in the City? Yes, Mr. Thompson is in the City. He's pretty well, thank you. Ah! Daggers, ropes, and poisons, has it come to this? You are talking about the weather, and another man's health, and another man's children, of which she is mother, to *her*? Time was the weather was all a burning sunshine, in which you and she basked; or if clouds gathered, and a storm fell, such a glorious rainbow haloed round you, such delicious tears fell and refreshed you, that the storm was more ravishing than the calm. And now another man's children are sitting on her knee—their mother's knee; and once a year Mr. and Mrs. John Thompson request the honour of Mr. Brown's company at dinner; and once a year you read in *The Times*, "In Nursery Street, the wife of J. Thompson, Esq., of a Son." To come to the once-beloved one's door, and find the knocker tied up with a white kid glove, is humiliating—say what you will it is humiliating.

Philip leaves his card, and walks on to the Cliff, and of course, in three minutes, meets Clinker. Indeed, who ever went to Brighton for half an hour without meeting Clinker?

"Father pretty well? His old patient, Lady Geminy, is down here with the children; what a number of them there are, to be sure! Come to make any stay? See your cousin, Miss Twysden, is here with the Penfolds. Little party at the Grigsons' last night; she looked uncommonly well; danced ever so many times with the Black Prince, Woolcomb of the Greens. Suppose I may congratulate you. Six thousand five hundred a year now, and thirteen thousand when his grandmother dies; but those negresses live for ever. I suppose the thing is settled. I saw them on the pier just now, and Mrs. Penfold was reading a book in the arbour. Book of sermons it was—pious woman, Mrs. Penfold. I dare say they are on the pier still." Striding with hurried steps Philip Firmin makes for the pier. The breathless Clinker cannot keep alongside of his face. I should like to have seen it when Clinker said that "the thing" was settled between Miss Twysden and the cavalry gentleman.

There were a few nursery governesses, maids, and children, paddling about at the end of the pier; and there was a fat woman reading a book in one of the arbours—but no Agnes, no Woolcomb. Where can they be? Can they be weighing each other? or buying those mad pebbles, which people are known to purchase? or having their silhouettes done in black? Ha! ha! Woolcomb would hardly have *his* face done in black. The idea would provoke odious comparisons. I see Philip is in a dreadfully bad sarcastic humour.

Up there comes from one of those trap-doors which lead down from the pier head to the green sea-waves ever restlessly jumping below—up there comes a little Skye-terrier dog with a red collar, who as soon as she sees Philip, sings, squeaks, whines, runs, jumps, *flumps* up on him, if I may use the expression, kisses his hands, and with eyes, tongue, paws, and tail

shows him a thousand marks of welcome and affection. What, Brownie, Brownie ! Philip is glad to see the dog, an old friend who has many a time licked his hand and bounced upon his knee.

The greeting over, Brownie, wagging her tail with prodigious activity, trots before Philip—trots down an opening, down the steps under which the waves shimmer greenly, and into quite a quiet remote corner just over the water, whence you may command a most beautiful view of the sea, the shore, the Marine Parade, and the Albion Hotel, and where, were I five-and-twenty say, with nothing else to do, I would gladly pass a quarter of an hour talking about Glaucus or the Wonders of the Deep with the object of my affections.

Here, amongst the labyrinth of piles, Brownie goes flouncing along till she comes to a young couple who are looking at the view just described. In order to view it better, the young man has laid his hand, a pretty little hand most delicately gloved, on the lady's hand ; and Brownie comes up and nuzzles against her, and whines and talks as much as to say, "Here's somebody," and the lady says, "Down, Brownie, miss."

"It's no good, Agnes, that dog," says the gentleman (he has very curly, not to say woolly hair, under his natty little hat). "I'll give you a pug with a nose you can hang your hat on. I do know of one now. My man Rummens knows of one. Do you like pugs ?"

"I adore them," says the lady.

"I'll give you one, if I have to pay fifty pounds for it. And they fetch a good figure, the real pugs do, I can tell you. Once in London there was an exhibition of 'em, and——"

"Brownie, Brownie, down !" cries Agnes. The dog was jumping at a gentleman, a tall gentleman with red mustachios and beard, who advances through the chequered shade, under the ponderous beams, over the translucent sea.

"Pray don't mind, Brownie won't hurt me," says a perfectly well-known voice, the sound of which sends all the colours shuddering out of Miss Agnes' pink cheeks.

"You see I gave my cousin this dog, Captain Woolcomb," says the gentleman ; "and the little slut remembers me. Perhaps Miss Twysden prefers the pug better."

"Sir !"

"If it has a nose you can hang your hat on, it must be a very pretty dog, and I suppose you intend to hang your hat on it a good deal."

"Oh, Philip !" says the lady ; but an attack of that dreadful coughing stops further utterance.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONTAINS TWO OF PHILIP'S MISHAPS.



OU know that, in some parts of India, infanticide is the common custom. It is part of the religion of the land, as, in other districts, widow-burning used to be. I can't imagine that ladies like to destroy either themselves or their children, though they submit with bravery, and even cheerfulness, to the decrees of that religion which orders them to make away with their own or their young ones' lives. Now, suppose you and I, as Europeans, happened to drive up where a young creature was just about to roast herself, under

the advice of her family and the highest dignitaries of her church; what could we do? Rescue her? No such thing. We know better than to interfere with her, and the laws and usages of her country. We turn away with a sigh from the mournful scene; we pull out our pocket-handkerchiefs, tell coachman to drive on, and leave her to her sad fate.

Now about poor Agnes Twysden: how, in the name of goodness, can we help her? You see she is a well brought up and religious young woman of the Brahminical sect. If she is to be sacrificed, that old Brahmin her father, that good and devout mother, that most special Brahmin her brother, and that admirable girl her strait-laced sister, all insist upon her undergoing the ceremony, and deck her with flowers ere they lead her to that dismal altar flame. Suppose, I say, she has made up her mind to throw over poor Philip, and take on with some one else? What sentiment ought our virtuous bosoms to entertain towards her? Anger? I have just been holding a conversation with a young fellow in rags and without shoes, whose bed is commonly a dry arch, who has been repeatedly in prison, whose father and mother were thieves, and whose grandfathers were thieves;—are we to be angry with him for following the paternal profession? With one eye brimming with pity, the other steadily keeping watch over the family spoons, I listen to his artless tale. I have no anger against that child; nor towards thee, Agnes, daughter of Talbot the Brahmin.

For though duty is duty, when it comes to the pinch, it is often hard to do. Though dear papa and mamma say that here is a gentleman with ever so many thousands a year, an undoubted part in So-and-So-shire, and whole islands in the western main, who is wildly in love with your fair skin and blue eyes, and is ready to fling all his treasures at your feet; yet, after all, when you consider that he is very ignorant, though very cunning; very stingy, though very rich; very ill-tempered, probably, if faces and eyes and mouths can tell truth: and as for Philip Firmin—though actually his legitimacy is dubious, as we have lately heard, in which case his maternal fortune is ours—and as for his paternal inheritance, we don't know whether the doctor is worth thirty thousand pounds or a shilling;—yet, after all—as for Philip—he is a man; he is a gentleman; he has brains in his head, and a great honest heart of which he has offered to give the best feelings to his cousin;—I say, when a poor girl has to be off with that old love, that honest and fair love, and be on with the new one, the dark one, I feel for her; and though the Brahmins are, as we know, the most genteel sect in Hindostan, I rather wish the poor child could have belonged to some lower and less rigid sect. Poor Agnes! to think that he has sat for hours, with mamma and Blanche or the governess, of course, in the room (for, you know, when she and Philip were quite wee wee things dear mamma had little amiable plans in view); has sat for hours by Miss Twysden's side pouring out his heart to her; has had, mayhap, little precious moments of confidential talk—little hasty whispers in corridors, on stairs, behind window-curtains, and—and so forth in fact. She must remember all this past; and can't, without some pang, listen on the same sofa, behind the same window-curtains, to her dark suitor pouring out his artless tales of barracks, boxing, horseflesh, and the tender passion. He is dull, he is mean, he is ill-tempered, he is ignorant, and the other was . . . ; but she will do her duty: oh, yes! she will do her duty! Poor Agnes! *C'est à fendre le cœur.* I declare I quite feel for her.

When Philip's temper was roused, I have been compelled, as his biographer, to own how very rude and disagreeable he could be; and you must acknowledge that a young man has some reason to be displeased, when he finds the girl of his heart hand in hand with another young gentleman in an occult and shady recess of the woodwork of Brighton Pier. The green waves are softly murmuring: so is the officer of the Life-Guards Green. The waves are kissing the beach. Ah, agonizing thought! I will not pursue the simile, which may be but a jealous man's mad fantasy. Of this I am sure, no pebble on that beach is cooler than polished Agnes. But, then, Philip drunk with jealousy is not a reasonable being like Philip sober. "He had a dreadful temper," Philip's dear aunt said of him afterwards,—"I trembled for my dear, gentle child, united for ever to a man of that violence. Never, in my secret mind, could I think that their union could be a happy one. Besides, you know, the nearness of their relationship. My scruples on that score, dear Mrs. Candour, never, never could be quite got over." And these

scruples came to weigh whole tons, when Mangrove Hall, the house in Berkeley Square, and Mr. Woolcomb's West India island were put into the scale along with them.

Of course there was no good in remaining amongst those damp,recking timbers, now that the pretty little *tête-à-tête* was over. Little Brownie hung fondling and whining round Philip's ankles, as the party ascended to the upper air. "My child, how pale you look!" cries Mrs. Penfold, putting down her volume. Out of the captain's opal eyeballs shot lurid flames, and hot blood burned behind his yellow cheeks. In a quarrel, Mr. Philip Firmin could be particularly cool and self-possessed. When Miss Agnes rather piteously introduced him to Mrs. Penfold, he made a bow as polite and gracious as any performed by his royal father. "My little dog knew me," he said, caressing the animal. "She is a faithful little thing, and she led me down to my cousin; and—Captain Woolcomb, I think, is your name, sir?"

As Philip curls his moustache and smiles blandly, Captain Woolcomb pulls his and scowls fiercely. "Yes, sir," he mutters, "my name is Woolcomb." Another bow and a touch of the hat from Mr. Firmin. A touch?—a gracious wave of the hat; acknowledged by no means so gracefully by Captain Woolcomb.

To these remarks, Mrs. Penfold says, "Oh!" In fact, "Oh!" is about the best thing that could be said under the circumstances.

"My cousin, Miss Twysden, looks so pale because she was out very late dancing last night. I hear it was a very pretty ball. But ought she to keep such late hours, Mrs. Penfold, with her delicate health? Indeed, you ought not, Agnes! Ought she to keep late hours, Brownie? There—don't, you little foolish thing! I gave my cousin the dog: and she's very fond of me—the dog is—still. You were saying, Captain Woolcomb, when I came up, that you would give Miss Twysden a dog on whose nose you could hang your I beg pardon?"

Mr. Woolcomb, as Philip made this second allusion to the peculiar nasal formation of the pug, ground his little white teeth together, and let slip a most improper monosyllable. More acute bronchial suffering was manifested on the part of Miss Twysden. Mrs. Penfold said, "The day is clouding over. I think, Agnes, I will have my chair, and go home."

"May I be allowed to walk with you as far as your house?" says Philip, twiddling a little locket which he wore at his watch-chain. It was a little gold locket, with a little pale hair inside. Whose hair could it have been that was so pale and fine? As for the pretty, hieroglyphical A. T. at the back, those letters might indicate Alfred Tennyson, or Anthony Trollope, who might have given a lock of their golden hair to Philip, for I know he is an admirer of their works.

Agnes looked guiltily at the little locket. Captain Woolcomb pulled his moustache so, that you would have thought he would have pulled it off; and his opal eyes glared with fearful confusion and wrath.

"Will you please to fall back and let me speak to you, Agnes? Pardon me, Captain Woolcomb, I have a private message for my cousin; and I came from London expressly to deliver it."

"If Miss Twysden desires me to withdraw, I fall back in one moment," says the captain, clenching the little lemon-coloured gloves.

"My cousin and I have lived together all our lives, and I bring her a family message. Have you any particular claim to hear it, Captain Woolcomb?"

"Not if Miss Twysden don't want me hear it. . . . D—the little brute."

"Don't kick poor little harmless Brownie! He shan't kick you, shall he, Brownie?"

"If the brute comes between my shins, I'll kick her!" shrieks the captain. "Hang her, I'll throw her into the sea!"

"Whatever you do to my dog, I swear I will do to you!" whispers Philip to the captain.

"Where are you staying?" shrieks the captain. "Hang you, you shall hear from me."

"Quiet—Bedford Hotel. Easy, or I shall think you want the ladies to overhear."

"Your conduct is horrible, sir," says Agnes, rapidly, in the French language. "Mr. does not comprehend it."

"— it! If you have any secrets to talk, I'll withdraw fast enough, Miss Agnes," says Othello.

"O Grenville! can I have any secrets from you? Mr. Firmin is my first-cousin. We have lived together all our lives. Philip, I—I don't know whether mamma announced to you—my—my engagement with Captain Grenville Woolcomb." The agitation has brought on another severe bronchial attack. Poor, poor little Agnes! What it is to have a delicate throat!

The pier tosses up to the skies, as though it had left its moorings—the houses on the cliff dance and reel, as though an earthquake was driving them—the sea walks up into the lodging-houses—and Philip's legs are failing from under him: it is only for a moment. When you have a large, tough double tooth out, doesn't the chair go up to the ceiling, and your head come off too? But, in the next instant, there is a grave gentleman before you, making you a bow, and concealing something in his right sleeve. The crash is over. You are a man again. Philip clutches hold of the chain pier for a minute: it does not sink under him. The houses, after reeling for a second or two, reassume the perpendicular, and bulge their bow-windows towards the main. He can see the people looking from the windows, the carriages passing, Professor Spurrier riding on the cliff with eighteen young ladies, his pupils. In long after days he remembers those absurd little incidents with a curious tenacity.

"This news," Philip says, "was not—not altogether unexpected. I congratulate my cousin, I am sure. Captain Woolcomb, had I known this for certain, I am sure I should not have interrupted you. You were going, perhaps, to ask me to your hospitable house, Mrs. Penfold?"

"Was she though?" cries the captain.

"I have asked a friend to dine with me at the Bedford, and shall go to town, I hope, in the morning. Can I take anything for you, Agnes? Good-bye;" and he kisses his hand in quite a *dégage* manner, as Mrs. Penfold's chair turns eastward and he goes to the west. Silently the tall Agnes sweeps along, a fair hand laid upon her friend's chair.

It's over! it's over! She has done it. He was bound, and kept his honour, but she did not: it was she who forsook him. And I fear very much Mr. Philip's heart leaps with pleasure and an immense sensation of relief at thinking he is free. He meets half a dozen acquaintances on the cliff. He laughs, jokes, shakes hands, invites two or three to dinner in the gayest manner. He sits down on that green, not very far from his inn, and is laughing to himself, when he suddenly feels something nestling at his knee,—rubbing, and nestling, and whining plaintively. "What, is that you?" It is little Brownie, who has followed him. Poor little rogue!

Then Philip bent down his head over the dog, and as it jumped on him, with little bleats, and whines, and innocent caresses, he broke out into a sob, and a great refreshing rain of tears fell from his eyes. Such a little illness! Such a mild fever! Such a speedy cure! Some people have the complaint so mildly that they are scarcely ever kept to their beds. Some bear its scars for ever.

Philip sate resolutely at the hotel all night, having given special orders to the porter to say that he was at home, in case any gentleman should call. He had a faint hope, he afterwards owned, that some friend of Captain Woolcomb might wait on him on that officer's part. He had a faint hope that a letter might come explaining that treason,—as people will have a sick, gnawing, yearning, foolish desire for letters—letters which contain nothing, which never did contain anything—letters which, nevertheless, you——. You know, in fact, about those letters, and there is no earthly use in asking to read Philip's. Have we not all read those love-letters which, after love-quarrels, come into court sometimes? We have all read them; and how many have written them? Nine o'clock. Ten o'clock. Eleven o'clock. No challenge from the captain; no explanation from Agnes. Philip declares he slept perfectly well. But poor little Brownie the dog made a piteous howling all night in the stables. She was not a well-bred dog. You could not have hung the least hat on her nose.

We compared anon our dear Agnes to a Brahmin lady, meekly offering herself up to sacrifice according to the practice used in her highly respectable caste. Did we speak in anger or in sorrow?—surely in terms of respectful grief and sympathy. And if we pity her, ought we not like-

wise to pity her highly respectable parents? When the notorious Brutus ordered his sons to execution, you can't suppose he was such a brute as to be pleased? All three parties suffered by the transaction: the sons, probably, even more than their austere father; but it stands to reason that the whole trio were very melancholy. At least, were I a poet or musical composer depicting that business, I certainly should make them so. The sons, piping in a very minor key indeed; the father's manly basso, accompanied by deep wind instruments, and interrupted by appropriate sobs. Though pretty fair Agnes is being led to execution, I don't suppose she likes it, or that her parents are happy, who are compelled to order the tragedy.

That the rich young proprietor of Mangrove Hall should be fond of her was merely a coincidence, Mrs. Twysden afterwards always averred. Not for mere wealth—ah, no! not for mines of gold—would they sacrifice their darling child. But when that sad Firmin affair happened, you see it also happened that Captain Woolcomb was much struck by dear Agnes, whom he met everywhere. Her scapegrace of a cousin would go nowhere. He preferred his bachelor associates, and horrible smoking and drinking habits, to the amusements and pleasures of more refined society. He neglected Agnes. There is not the slightest doubt he neglected and mortified her, and his wilful and frequent absence showed how little he cared for her. Would you blame the dear girl for coldness to a man who himself showed such indifference to her? "No, my good Mrs. Candour. Had Mr. Firmin been ten times as rich as Mr. Woolcomb, I should have counselled my child to refuse him. *I* take the responsibility of the measure entirely on myself—I, and her father, and her brother." So Mrs. Twysden afterwards spoke, in circles where an absurd and odious rumour ran, that the Twysdens had forced their daughter to jilt young Mr. Firmin in order to marry a wealthy quadroon. People will talk, you know, *de me, de te*. If Woolcomb's dinners had not gone off so after his marriage, I have little doubt the scandal would have died away, and he and his wife might have been pretty generally respected and visited.

Nor must you suppose, as we have said, that dear Agnes gave up her first love without a pang. That bronchitis showed how acutely the poor thing felt her position. It broke out very soon after Mr. Woolcomb's attentions became a little particular; and she actually left London in consequence. It is true that he could follow her without difficulty, but so, for the matter of that, could Philip, as we have seen, when he came down and behaved so rudely to Captain Woolcomb. And before Philip came, poor Agnes could plead, "My father pressed me sair," as in the case of the notorious Mrs. Robin Gray.

Father and mother both pressed her sair. Mrs. Twysden, I think I have mentioned, wrote an admirable letter, and was aware of her accomplishment. She used to write reams of gossip regularly every week to dear uncle Ringwood when he was in the country: and when her

daughter Blanche married, she is said to have written several of her new son's sermons. As a Christian mother, was she not to give her daughter her advice at this momentous period of her life? That advice went against poor Philip's chances with his cousin, who was kept acquainted with all the circumstances of the controversy of which we have just seen the issue. I do not mean to say that Mrs. Twysden gave an impartial statement of the case. What parties in a lawsuit do speak impartially on their own side or their adversaries? Mrs. Twysden's view, as I have learned subsequently, and as imparted to her daughter, was this:—That most unprincipled man, Dr. Firmin, who had already attempted, and unjustly, to deprive the Twysdens of a part of their property, had commenced in quite early life his career of outrage and wickedness against the Ringwood family. He had led dear Lord Ringwood's son, poor dear Lord Cinqbars, into a career of vice and extravagance which caused the premature death of that unfortunate young nobleman. Mr. Firmin had then made a marriage, in spite of the tears and entreaties of Mrs. Twysden, with her late unhappy sister, whose whole life had been made wretched by the doctor's conduct. But the climax of outrage and wickedness was, that when he—he, a low, penniless adventurer—married Colonel Ringwood's daughter, he was married already, as could be sworn by the repentant clergyman who had been forced, by threats of punishment which Dr. Firmin held over him, to perform the rite! "The mind"—Mrs. Talbot Twysden's fine mind—"shuddered at the thought of such wickedness." But most of all (for to think ill of any one whom she had once loved gave her pain) there was reason to believe that the unhappy Philip Firmin was his *father's accomplice*, and that he knew of his *own illegitimacy*, which he was determined to set aside by any *fraud or artifice*—(she trembled, she wept to have to say this: O Heaven! that there should be such perversity in thy creatures!) And so little store did Philip set by *his mother's honour*, that he actually visited the abandoned woman who acquiesced in her own infamy, and had brought such unspeakable disgrace on the Ringwood family! The thought of this crime had caused Mrs. Twysden and her dear husband nights of sleepless anguish—had made them *years and years older*—had stricken their hearts with a grief which must endure to the *end of their days*. With people so unscrupulous, so grasping, so artful as Dr. Firmin and (must she say?) his son, they were bound to be *on their guard*; and though they had *avoided* Philip, she had deemed it right, on the rare occasions when she and the young man whom she must now call her *illegitimate* nephew met, to behave as though she knew nothing of this most dreadful controversy.

"And now, dearest child" . . . Surely the moral is obvious? The dearest child "must see at once that any foolish plans which were formed in childish days and under *former delusions* must be cast aside for ever as impossible, as unworthy of a Twysden—or a Ringwood. Be not concerned for the young man himself," wrote Mrs. Twysden—"I blush that he should

bear that dear father's name who was slain in honour on Busaco's glorious field. P. F. has *associates* amongst whom he has ever been much more at home than in our refined circle, and habits which will cause him to forget you only too easily. And if near you is one whose ardour shows itself in his every word and action, whose wealth and property may raise you to a place worthy of my child, need I say, a mother's, a father's blessing go with you." This letter was brought to Miss Twysden, at Brighton, by a special messenger; and the superscription announced that it was "honoured by Captain Grenville Woolcomb."

Now when Miss Agnes has had a letter to this effect (I may at some time tell you how I came to be acquainted with its contents); when she remembers all the abuse her brother lavishes against Philip, as, Heaven bless some of them! dear relatives can best do; when she thinks how cold he has of late been—how he *will* come smelling of cigars—how he won't conform to the usages *du monde*, and has neglected all the decencies of society—how she often can't understand his strange rhapsodies about poetry, painting, and the like, nor how he can live with such associates as those who seem to delight him—and now how he is showing himself actually *unprincipled* and abetting his horrid father; when we consider mither pressing sair, and all these points in mither's favour, I don't think we can order Agnes to instant execution for the resolution to which she is coming. She will give him up—she will give him up. Good-bye, Philip. Good-bye the past. Be forgotten, be forgotten, fond words spoken in not unwilling ears! Be still and breathe not, eager lips, that have trembled so near to one another! Unlock, hands, and part for ever, that seemed to be formed for life's long journey! Ah, to part for ever is hard; but harder and more humiliating still to part without regret!

That papa and mamma had influenced Miss Twysden in her behaviour my wife and I could easily imagine, when Philip, in his wrath and grief, came to us and poured out the feelings of his heart. My wife is a repository of men's secrets, an untiring consoler and comforter; and she knows many a sad story which we are not at liberty to tell, like this one of which this person, Mr. Firmin, has given us possession.

"Father and mother's orders," shouts Philip, "I daresay, Mrs. Pendennis; but the wish was father to the thought of parting, and it was for the blackamoor's parks and acres that the girl jilted me. Look here. I told you just now that I slept perfectly well on that infernal night after I had said farewell to her. Well, I didn't. It was a lie. I walked ever so many times the whole length of the cliff, from Hove to Rottingdean almost, and then went to bed afterwards, and slept a little out of sheer fatigue. And as I was passing by Horizontal Terrace (—I happened to pass by there two or three times in the moonlight, like a great jackass)—you know those verses of mine which I have hummed here sometimes?" (hummed! he used to roar them!) "'When the locks of burnished gold, lady, shall to silver turn!' Never mind the rest. You know the verses

about fidelity and old age? She was singing them on that night, to that negro. And I heard the beggar's voice say, 'Bravo!' through the open windows."

"Ah, Philip! it was cruel," says my wife, heartily pitying our friend's anguish and misfortune. "It was cruel indeed. I am sure we can feel for you. But think what certain misery a marriage with such a person would have been! Think of your warm heart given away for ever to that heartless creature."

"Laura, Laura, have you not often warned me not to speak ill of people?" says Laura's husband.

"I can't help it sometimes," cries Laura in a transport. "I try and do my best not to speak ill of my neighbours; but the worldliness of those people shocks me so that I can't bear to be near them. They are so utterly tied and bound by conventionalities, so perfectly convinced of their own excessive high-breeding, that they seem to me more odious and more vulgar than quite low people; and I am sure Mr. Philip's friend, the Little Sister, is infinitely more ladylike than his dreary aunt or either of his supercilious cousins! Upon my word, when this lady did speak her mind, there was no mistaking her meaning."

I believe Mr. Firmin took a considerable number of people into his confidence regarding this love affair. He is one of those individuals who can't keep their secrets; and when hurt he roars so loudly that all his friends can hear. It has been remarked that the sorrows of such persons do not endure very long; nor surely was there any great need in this instance that Philip's heart should wear a lengthened mourning. Ere long he smoked his pipes, he played his billiards, he shouted his songs; he rode in the Park for the pleasure of severely cutting his aunt and cousins when their open carriage passed, or of riding down Captain Woolcomb or his cousin Ringwood, should either of those worthies come in his way.

One day, when the old Lord Ringwood came to town for his accustomed spring visit, Philip condescended to wait upon him, and was announced to his lordship just as Talbot Twysden and Ringwood his son were taking leave of their noble kinsman. Philip looked at them with a flashing eye and a distended nostril, according to his swaggering wont. I daresay they on their part bore a very mean and hangdog appearance; for my lord laughed at their discomfiture, and seemed immensely amused as they slunk out of the door when Philip came hectoring in.

"So, sir, there has been a family row. Heard all about it: at least, their side. Your father did me the favour to marry my niece, having another wife already?"

"Having no other wife already, sir—though my dear relations were anxious to show that he had."

"Wanted your money; thirty thousand pound is not a triflē. Ten thousand apiece for those children. And no more need of any confounded pinching and scraping, as they have to do at Beaunash Street.

Affair off between you and Agnes? Absurd affair. So much the better."

"Yes, sir, so much the better."

"Have ten thousand apiece. Would have twenty thousand if they got yours. Quite natural to want it."

"Quite."

"Woolcomb a sort of negro, I understand. Fine property here; besides the West India rubbish. Violent man—so people tell me. Luckily Agnes seems a cool, easy-going woman, and must put up with the rough as well as the smooth in marrying a property like that. Very lucky for you that that woman persists there was no marriage with your father. Twysden says the doctor bribed her. Take it he's not got much money to bribe, unless you gave some of yours."

"I don't bribe people to bear false witness, my lord—and if——"

"Don't be in a huff; I didn't say so. Twysden says so—perhaps thinks so. When people are at law they believe anything of one another."

"I don't know what other people may do, sir. If I had another man's money, I should not be easy until I had paid him back. Had my share of my grandfather's property not been lawfully mine—and for a few hours I thought it was not—please God, I would have given it up to its rightful owners—at least, my father would."

"Why, hang it all, man, you don't mean to say your father has not settled with you?"

Philip blushed a little. He had been rather surprised that there had been no settlement between him and his father.

"I am only of age a few months, sir. I am not under any apprehension. I get my dividends regularly enough. One of my grandfather's trustees, General Baynes, is in India. He is to return almost immediately, or we should have sent a power of attorney out to him. There's no hurry about the business."

Philip's maternal grandfather, and Lord Ringwood's brother, the late Colonel Philip Ringwood, had died possessed of but trifling property of his own; but his wife had brought him a fortune of sixty thousand pounds, which was settled on their children, and in the names of trustees—Mr. Briggs, a lawyer, and Colonel Baynes, an East India officer, and friend of Mrs. Philip Ringwood's family. Colonel Baynes had been in England some eight years before; and Philip remembered a kind old gentleman coming to see him at school, and leaving tokens of his bounty behind. The other trustee, Mr. Briggs, a lawyer of considerable county reputation, was dead long since, having left his affairs in an involved condition. During the trustee's absence and the son's minority, Philip's father received the dividends on his son's property, and liberally spent them on the boy. Indeed, I believe that for some little time at college, and during his first journeys abroad, Mr. Philip spent rather more than the income of his maternal inheritance, being freely supplied by his

father, who told him not to stint himself. He was a sumptuous man, Dr. Firmin—open-handed—subscribing to many charities—a lover of solemn good cheer. The doctor's dinners and the doctor's equipages were models in their way; and I remember the sincere respect with which my uncle the major (the family guide in such matters) used to speak of Dr. Firmin's taste. "No duchess in London, sir," he would say, "drove better horses than Mrs. Firmin. Sir George Warrender, sir, could not give a better dinner, sir, than that to which we sat down yesterday." And for the exercise of these civic virtues the doctor had the hearty respect of the good major.

"Don't tell me, sir," on the other hand, Lord Ringwood would say; "I dined with the fellow once—a swaggering fellow, sir; but a servile fellow. The way he bowed and flattered was perfectly absurd. Those fellows think we like it—and we may. Even at my age, I like flattery—any quantity of it; and not what you call delicate, but strong, sir. I like a man to kneel down and kiss my shoestrings. I have my own opinion of him afterwards, but that is what I like—what all men like; and that is what Firmin gave in quantities. But you could see that his house was monstrously expensive. His dinner was excellent, and you saw it was good every day—not like your dinners, my good Maria; not like your wines, Twysden, which, hang it, I can't swallow, unless I send 'em in myself. Even at my own house, I don't give that kind of wine on common occasions which Firmin used to give. I drink the best myself, of course, and give it to some who know; but I don't give it to common fellows, who come to hunting dinners, or to girls and boys who are dancing at my balls."

"Yes; Mr. Firmin's dinners were very handsome—and a pretty end came of the handsome dinners!" sighed Mrs. Twysden.

"That's not the question; I am only speaking about the fellow's meat and drink, and they were both good. And it's my opinion, that fellow will have a good dinner wherever he goes."

I had the fortune to be present at one of these feasts, which Lord Ringwood attended, and at which I met Philip's trustee, General Baynes, who had just arrived from India. I remember now the smallest details of the little dinner,—the brightness of the old plate, on which the doctor prided himself, and the quiet comfort, not to say splendour, of the entertainment. The general seemed to take a great liking to Philip, whose grandfather had been his special friend and comrade in arms. He thought he saw something of Philip Ringwood in Philip Firmin's face.

"Ah, indeed!" growls Lord Ringwood.

"You ain't a bit like him," says the downright General. "Never saw a handsomer or more open-looking fellow than Philip Ringwood."

"Oh! I daresay I looked pretty open myself forty years ago," said my lord; "now I'm shut, I suppose. I don't see the least likeness in this young man to my brother."

"That is some sherry as old as the century," whispers the host;

"it is the same the Prince Regent liked so at a Mansion House dinner, five and twenty years ago."

"Never knew anything about wine; was always tippling liqueurs and punch. What do you give for this sherry, doctor?"

The doctor sighed, and looked up to the chandelier. "Drink it while it lasts, my good lord; but don't ask me the price. The fact is, I don't like to say what I gave for it."

"You need not stint yourself in the price of sherry, doctor," cries the General gaily; "you have but one son, and he has a fortune of his own, as I happen to know. You haven't dipped it, master Philip?"

"I fear, sir, I may have exceeded my income sometimes, in the last three years; but my father has helped me."

"Exceeded nine hundred a-year! Upon my word! When I was a sub, my friends gave me fifty pounds a-year, and I never was a shilling in debt! What are men coming to now?"

"If doctors drink Prince Regent's sherry at ten guineas a dozen, what can you expect of their sons, General Baynes?" grumbles my lord.

"My father gives you his best, my lord," says Philip gaily; "if you know of any better, he will get it for you. *Si non his utere mecum!* Please to pass me that decanter, Pen!"

I thought the old lord did not seem ill pleased at the young man's freedom; and now, as I recall it, think I can remember, that a peculiar silence and anxiety seemed to weigh upon our host—upon him whose face was commonly so anxious and sad.

The famous sherry, which had made many voyages to Indian climes before it acquired its exquisite flavour, had travelled some three or four times round the doctor's polished table, when Brice, his man, entered with a letter on his silver tray. Perhaps Philip's eyes and mine exchanged glances in which ever so small a scintilla of mischief might sparkle. The doctor often had letters when he was entertaining his friends; and his patients had a knack of falling ill at awkward times.

"Gracious heavens!" cries the doctor, when he read the despatch—it was a telegraphic message. "The poor Grand Duke!"

"What Grand Duke?" asks the surly lord of Ringwood.

"My earliest patron and friend—the Grand Duke of Gröningen! Seized this morning at eleven at Potzendorff! Has sent for me. I promised to go to him if ever he had need of me. I must go! I can save the night-train yet. General! our visit to the city must be deferred till my return. Get a portmanteau, Brice; and call a cab at once. Philip will entertain my friends for the evening. My dear lord, you won't mind an old doctor leaving you to attend an old patient? I will write from Groningen. I shall be there on Friday morning. Farewell, gentlemen! Brice, another bottle of that sherry! I pray, don't let anybody stir! God bless you, Philip, my boy!" And with this the doctor went up, took his son by the hand, and laid the other very kindly on the young man's shoulder. Then he made a bow round the table to his guests—one

of his graceful bows, for which he was famous. I can see the sad smile on his face now, and the light from the chandelier over the dining-table glancing from his shining forehead, and casting deep shadows on to his cheek from his heavy brows.

The departure was a little abrupt, and of course cast somewhat of a gloom upon the company.

"My carriage ain't ordered till ten—must go on sitting here, I suppose. Confounded life doctor's must be! Called up any hour in the night! Get their fees! Must go!" growled the great man of the party.

"People are glad enough to have them when they are ill, my lord. I think I have heard that once, when you were at Ryde . . ."

The great man started back as if a little shock of cold water had fallen on him; and then looked at Philip with not unfriendly glances. "Treated for gout—so he did. Very well, too!" said my lord; and whispered, not inaudibly, "Cool hand, that boy!" And then his lordship fell to talk with General Baynes about his campaigning, and his early acquaintance with his own brother, Philip's grandfather.

The general did not care to brag about his own feats of arms, but was loud in praises of his old comrade. Philip was pleased to hear his grand-sire so well spoken of. The general had known Dr. Firmin's father also, who likewise had been a colonel in the famous old Peninsular army. "A Tartar that fellow was, and no mistake!" said the good officer. "Your father has a strong look of him; and you have a glance of him at times. But you remind me of Philip Ringwood not a little; and you could not belong to a better man."

"Ha!" says my lord. There had been differences between him and his brother. He may have been thinking of days when they were friends. Lord Ringwood now graciously asked if General Baynes was staying in London? But the General had only come to do this piece of business, which must now be delayed. He was too poor to live in London. He must look out for a country place, where he and his six children could live cheaply. "Three boys at school, and one at college, Mr. Philip—you know what that must cost; though, thank my stars, my college boy does not spend nine hundred a year. Nine hundred! Where should we be if he did?" In fact, the days of nabobs are long over, and the general had come back to his native country with only very small means for the support of a great family.

When my lord's carriage came, he departed, and the other guests presently took their leave. The General, who was a bachelor for the nonce, remained awhile, and we three prattled over cheroots in Philip's smoking-room. It was a night like a hundred I have spent there, and yet how well I remember it! We talked about Philip's future prospects, and he communicated his intentions to us in his lordly way. As for practising at the bar: No, sir! he said, in reply to General Baynes' queries, he should not make much hand of that: shouldn't if he were ever so poor. He had his own money, and his father's, and he condescended to say that

he might, perhaps, try for Parliament should an eligible opportunity offer. "Here's a fellow born with a silver spoon in his mouth," says the general, as we walked away together. "A fortune to begin with; a fortune to inherit. My fortune was two thousand pounds and the price of my two first commissions; and when I die my children will not be quite so well off as their father was when he began!"

Having parted with the old officer at his modest sleeping quarters near his club, I walked to my own home, little thinking that yonder cigar, of which I had shaken some of the ashes in Philip's smoking-room, was to be the last tobacco I ever should smoke there. The pipe was smoked out. The wine was drunk. When that door closed on me, it closed for the last time—at least was never more to admit me as Philip's, as Dr. Firmin's, guest and friend. I pass the place often now. My youth comes back to me as I gaze at those blank, shining windows. I see myself a boy, and Philip a child; and his fair mother; and his father, the hospitable, the melancholy, the magnificent. I wish I could have helped him. I wish somehow he had borrowed money. He never did. He gave me his osten. I have never seen him since that night when his own door closed upon him.

On the second day after the doctor's departure, as I was at breakfast with my family, I received the following letter:—

MY DEAR PENDENNIS,

COULD I have seen you in private on Tuesday night, I might have warned you of the calamity which was hanging over my house. Let to what good end? That you should know a few weeks, hours, before what all the world will ring with to-morrow? Neither you nor I, nor one whom we both love, would have been the happier for knowing my misfortunes a few hours sooner. In four-and-twenty hours every club in London will be busy with talk of the departure of the celebrated Dr. Firmin—the wealthy Dr. Firmin; a few months more and (I have strict and confidential reason to believe) hereditary rank would have been mine, but Sir George Firmin would have been an insolvent man, and his son Sir Philip a beggar. Perhaps the thought of this honour has been one of the reasons which has determined me on expatriating myself sooner than I otherwise needed to have done.

George Firmin, the honoured, the wealthy physician, and his son a beggar? I see you are startled at the news! You wonder how, with a great practice, and no great ostensible expenses, such ruin should have come upon me—upon him. It has seemed as if for years past Fate has been determined to make war upon George Brand Firmin; and who can battle against Fate? A man universally admitted to be of good judgment, I have embarked in mercantile speculations the most promising. Everything upon which I laid my hand has crumbled to ruin; but I can say with the Roman bard, "*Impavidum ferient ruinae.*" And, almost penniless, almost aged, an exile driven from my country, I seek another where I do not despair—I even have a firm belief that I shall be enabled to repair my shattered fortunes! My race has never been deficient in courage, and Philip and *Philip's father* must use all theirs, so as to be enabled to face the dark times which menace them. *Si celeres quatit penas Fortuna*, we must resign what she gave us, and bear our calamity with unshaken hearts!

There is a man, I own to you, whom I cannot, I must not face. General Baynes has just come from India, with but very small savings, I fear; and these are jeopardized by his imprudence and my most cruel and unexpected misfortune. I need

not tell you that *my all* would have been my boy's. My will, made long since, will be found in the tortoiseshell secretaire standing in my consulting-room under the picture of Abraham offering up Isaac. In it you will see that everything, except annuities to old and deserving servants and a legacy to one excellent and faithful woman whom I own I have wronged—my all, which once was considerable, *is left to my boy*.

I am now worth less than nothing, and have compromised Philip's property along with my own. As a man of business, General Baynes, Colonel Ringwood's old companion in arms, was culpably careless, and I—alas! that I must own it—deceived him. Being the only surviving trustee (Mrs. Philip Ringwood's other trustee was an unprincipled attorney who has been long dead), General B. signed a paper authorizing, as he imagined, my bankers to receive Philip's dividends, but, in fact, giving me the power to dispose of the capital sum. On my honour, as a man, as a gentleman, as a father, Pendennis, I hoped to replace it ! I took it ; I embarked it in speculations in which it sank down with ten times the amount of my own private property. Half-year after half-year, with straitened means and with the *greatest difficulty to myself*, my poor boy has had his dividend ; and *he* at least has never known what was want or anxiety until now. Want ? Anxiety ? Pray Heaven he never may suffer the sleepless anguish, the racking care which has pursued me ! "Post equitem sedet atra cura," our favourite poet says. Ah ! how truly, too, does he remark, "Patræ quis exul se quoque fugit ?" Think you where I go grief and remorse will not follow me ? They will never leave me until I shall return to this country—for that I *shall* return, my heart tells me—until I can reimburse General Baynes, who stands indebted to Philip through his incautiousness and my overpowering necessity ; and my heart—an erring but fond *father's* heart—tells me that my boy will not eventually lose a penny by my misfortune.

I own, between ourselves, that this illness of the Grand Duke of Gröningen was a pretext which I put forward. You will hear of me ere long from the place whither for some time past I have determined on bending my steps. I placed 100*l.* on Saturday, to Philip's credit, at his banker's. I take little more than that sum with me ; depressed, yet *full of hope* ; having done wrong, yet *determined* to retrieve it, and *vowing* that ere I die my poor boy shall not have to blush at bearing the name of

GEORGE BRAND FIRMIN.

Good-bye, dear Philip ! Your old friend will tell you of my misfortunes. When I write again, it will be to tell you where to address me ; and wherever I am, or whatever misfortunes oppress me, think of me always as your fond FATHER.

I had scarce read this awful letter when Philip Firmin himself came into our breakfast-room, looking very much disturbed.

The Study of History.

No abstract question has of late years attracted or deserved greater attention than the inquiry whether history is or is not capable of being studied as a science. The activity of the controversy is proved by the fact, that within the last few months two articles on the affirmative side have been contributed to a well-known quarterly review, whilst the professors of modern history at each university have published lectures maintaining the negative. To the world at large the chief interest of the question lies in its bearing on morality. It is a phase which, in this country at least, is somewhat novel and unusual of the old controversy on free-will and necessity, the interest of which it revives rather by the new evidence which it is supposed to adduce on the necessarian side than by new arguments. As usual in such cases, the temper in which the antagonists write has more to do with the sympathies of their readers than the arguments which they use; and judging by this test, there can be no doubt that those who oppose the notion that history can be treated as a science are, and in several important respects deserve to be, on the popular side. They profess to be, and no doubt are, actuated by a genuine desire to uphold both the dignity and the morality of human conduct, and they are able to put forward some strong and many specious reasons for contending that their antagonists are indifferent to both. Their opponents, on the contrary, write, for the most part, with a disregard for the feelings of mankind which is almost studied, and seem to feel a positive satisfaction in the prospect, which their speculations appear to afford, of overthrowing most of the principles on which morality depends. An attentive examination of the subject will, however, be found to tend to the conclusion that the whole discussion is altogether irrelevant to morals, and that the base upon which they rest would remain unshaken, even if it should turn out to be possible to construct a real science of history.

The apprehensions entertained by those who deny the possibility of constructing a science of history are stated with eloquence by Mr. Goldwin Smith. "I shall," he says, "continue to believe that humanity advances by free effort, but that it is not developed according to invariable laws, such as, when discovered, would give birth to a new science. I confess that I am not wholly unbiased in adhering to this belief. . . . There is no man who would not recoil from rendering up his free personality and all it enfolds to become a mere link in a chain of causation—a mere grain in a mass of being—even though the chain were not more of iron than of gold, even though the mass were all beautiful and good,

instead of being full of evil, loathsomeness, and horror." These vigorous words express with much point the feeling with which the writings to which they refer must excite in almost every mind at first sight, and which their faults of style tend greatly to excite and confirm. Otherwise expressed, they involve some such assertions as these:—Physical science is possible, because matter is inanimate, and is moved according to necessary laws; science relating to human actions is impossible, because man is a free, rational, and responsible agent. In the opening sentence of his lecture, Mr. Goldwin Smith expresses this feeling. "The first question which the student has now to ask himself is, whether history is governed by necessary laws? If it is, it ought to be written and read as a science." The following words of one of his opponents are to much the same effect:—"In the physical and the moral world, in the natural and the human, are ever seen two *forces*" (the italics are not in the original)—"invariable rule and continual advance, law and action, order and progress; *these two powers working harmoniously together*, and the result inevitable sequence, orderly movement, irresistible growth." The question between the two thus appears to be reduced to this—Whether a state of things which each recognizes in the physical, prevails also in the moral world. This is affirmed by the one, and denied by the other.

It is unquestionably true that physical science supplies evidence as to what morality has to hope or to fear from the invention of a science of human actions, if such a science is possible. Hence, the first step towards ascertaining the interest of morality in the discussion must be to ascertain the truth of the popular notion that physical science is founded upon the existence of brute matter, moved according to necessary laws. These phrases, and especially the latter, are so constantly used by the disputants, that they colour the whole discussion. The discovery of the "laws" by which physical nature is "governed" is constantly asserted to be the great object of all scientific inquiry. The hope of discovering similar "laws" "governing" human conduct is the prospect which animates those who believe in the possibility of constructing a science of history. What, then, is meant by the "laws" with which physical science is conversant?

To speak of matter being governed at all, and still more to speak of its being governed by law, is obviously a metaphor, but it is a metaphor so natural and so common that, to almost every one, it stands in the place of the definite assertion of a truth. It is, therefore, not so superfluous as it may at first sight appear to state what the precise meaning of the words "law" and "govern" is. A *law* is a command enjoining a course of conduct; and a *command* is an intimation by the stronger to the weaker of two reasonable beings, that unless the weaker does or forbears to do some specified thing, the stronger will in some way or other hurt or injure him. People are said to govern others by law, where they influence their conduct by

imposing laws upon them. That this is the proper sense of the word "law," and that all others are derivative and metaphorical, has been abundantly proved by well-known writers on the subject, especially by the late Mr. Austin, in his Lectures on the Province of Jurisprudence, and especially in the first and fifth. It is obvious, from every part of this definition, that reason on the part both of the governor and the governed is essential to the very notion of law ; and that, therefore, as applied to material objects, the word is purely metaphorical, and means nothing else than that we observe in their motions a regularity which, if they were reasonable agents, originating from time to time their own motion, would show their complete obedience to what, if it had been addressed to them under penalties, would have been a law. If the sun and the planets were men, who yielded implicit obedience to a command to keep constantly moving in certain directions, those directions would be indicated by the principles discovered by astronomers ; and as the bodies in question do in fact move constantly in those directions, the principles are called laws. If the language of the necessarian school of historians is to be taken strictly, it implies not that persons are necessary, but that things are voluntary agents, for it represents them as yielding obedience to commands. Nothing sets the contrast between proper and metaphorical laws in so clear a light as specific illustrations of each. Few metaphorical "laws" are better known than the laws of motion, the third of which is as follows :—" When pressure produces motion in a body, the momentum generated is proportional to the pressure."

Compare this with a law in the proper sense. The following is the sixth section of an Act of Parliament passed last session, respecting the commutation of tithes :—" The commissioners shall have access to the books of the comptroller of corn returns, and shall be furnished by him with such information as they may require for the purposes of any award," &c. A comparison of these different "laws" sets in a strong light the inadequacy and the misleading and delusive character of the metaphor which assigns that name to the former. The great leading distinction between them is, that, in the case of the laws of motion, the facts make the law ; in the case of the Act of Parliament the law governs the facts. If one exception to the third law of motion could be established, the law would hold no longer. If every comptroller of corn returns in England refused access to his books to the commissioners, the law upon the subject would remain just as it is, and would be called into operation for the purposes of punishment. Thus the vital distinction between real and metaphorical laws is, that the first are commands, the second are mere records of facts, and, by describing them as laws, the mind is almost inevitably infected with the notion that they have not only an existence of their own apart from facts, but an energy of their own by which they control them.

There is no doubt one sense in which such "laws" as the laws of

motion may be described by that name without impropriety. They are rules for conducting investigations, and may thus, without any violent abuse of language, be described as laws binding on the mind which pursues such investigations, the penalty being error. Thus the third law of motion might be expressed as follows:—"Whoever wishes to ascertain the momentum generated in a moving body must make his calculations on the principle that the momentum is proportional to the pressure." If it be assumed that there is an intelligent Author of Nature, and that there is evidence that his will as to scientific investigations is to this effect, the laws of motion may be described as laws in the proper sense of the word. Upon any other supposition, the use of the word is more or less improper.

The most appropriate way of expressing this would be to drop the use of the word "law" altogether in such cases, and to substitute for it either "rule" or "formula," either of which fully expresses what is intended, whilst neither is misleading. Such expressions as the "laws of gravitation" have led many people into serious error, but no one was ever misled by speaking of the rule of three into the notion that numbers form a sort of society amongst themselves.

This account of the nature of the subject-matter which science investigates, shows that it teaches far less about material objects than many people are led to believe by the vast practical importance of modern scientific discoveries. No phrases are more common than those which assert the brute inanimate nature of matter, and the certainty of scientific processes is supposed to depend upon this circumstance. Upon closer examination, it will be found that physical science asserts absolutely nothing whatever on this point. The words in which we describe material objects are mere veils for our own ignorance and metaphors derived from our own conduct. The sciences which we have devised for the purpose of understanding them are relative exclusively to ourselves, and not to them. Thus, when we say the cannon-ball knocks down the house, we speak incorrectly, for we predicate action of the cannon-ball, and we cannot prove it. All that we can say with certainty is, the ball impinges, the wall falls. In practice, no doubt, it is constantly necessary (as the whole structure of language proves) to personify the material world, and attribute to it action and passion; but in doing so, we expose ourselves to the risk of raising a phantom which is very embarrassing when we come to speculate on human conduct—the phantom of a set of slavish agents destitute of any moral relations whatever, and capable only of receiving impressions from without.

Physical science gives no warrant for any such opinion as this. It tells us nothing about the internal constitution of material objects. We do not learn from it that matter is inanimate, insensible, and incapable of voluntary action, but only that we have no evidence to the contrary; and that whatever may be the truth on this point, all the sensible motions of all weighty objects, whether known or not known to be animated, may be

predicted by the help of certain general rules of calculation. The rule that the force of gravity varies inversely as the square of the distance, applies equally whether we wish to calculate the height and length of a man's jump or the direction of a planet's orbit. The one agent is rational and voluntary; of the other we know absolutely nothing, but we use the same formula to form our judgment in each instance. Such formulas enable us to determine the mode of the actions which we use them to predict, but they show nothing whatever as to their cause. It would be impossible to disprove on scientific grounds the assertion that a chair or a table has a soul, though it would be easy to show that we have not the smallest reason to think so. A year or two ago a curious and very ingenious little book was published, the object of which was to prove that the material world was living, and that we were prevented from recognizing its life by the limited nature of our own organs; nor could any other answer be given to it than that such a doctrine is a mere guess, unsupported by any evidence.

It is of great practical importance to remember the immense extent of the questions relating to material objects which are thus left open by physical science, because the fears which are excited by attempts to apply scientific processes to studies connected with human action are founded almost entirely upon the mistaken notion that science proves the truth of one half of the well-known lines of Pope—

“Who, binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.”

That nature is bound fast in fate is a proposition altogether beyond our knowledge; all that we know is that we can predict some of the events which will occur if things continue to go on as they hitherto have gone on. Whether or not they will so continue is a point on which we know nothing, though we have no reason to doubt it; but there is a great distinction between affirmative knowledge and what must be called negative certainty, and the neglect of this distinction is a fruitful source of hasty conclusions and bitter jealousy. The subtlety of metaphors, and the ease with which the common usages of language mislead all but the most careful observers, is one of the most singular facts in the whole history of speculation. Thus it is almost always assumed that to affirm that it is certain that something will happen is equivalent to denying that any one has the power to prevent it; and this persuasion is really the only or at least the chief objection which people entertain to the attempt to construct what is called a science of history. Attention, however, shows (as the Archbishop of Dublin long since pointed out) that this is an entire mistake, and that physical science proves it to be one.

No one ever affirmed that human actions could be predicted with any greater certainty than that with which we predict that the sun will rise to-morrow; but what is the strict meaning of that assertion—in what sense is it certain that the sun will rise? The expression means no

more than this—that we have no doubt about it, and that we have reason to believe that any one who applies his mind to the subject will have as little doubt. The notion, that there is some abstract necessity, some overruling fate, some specific agent, called a force, by which the planets are moved in their orbits, is an irrational superstition. Certainty is an attribute of mind, and the assertion that something is certain in the abstract means only that the person making the assertion does not specify the mind with reference to which he makes it.

The nature of the grounds on which we are certain that the sun will rise to-morrow, proves this beyond all doubt. Those grounds are, that there is strong evidence, in infinite abundance, to show that the motions of all heavy bodies may be predicted by the application of certain rules; that there is no evidence to show that this state of things has ever varied at any period as to which we have any information; and that if those rules apply for a few hours longer, the phenomenon of sunrise will present itself. As a matter of fact, such evidence would satisfy every mind with which we are acquainted as soon as it was apprehended. Why it should do so we cannot tell. It is for the present an ultimate fact beyond which we cannot go. Reasonable, however, and, indeed, inevitable as such a conclusion is, it is quite possible that it may be false in fact, and that possibility cannot be refuted, otherwise than by the occurrence of the event. It may be that the rules which we have devised are not the only ones which are necessary, in order to predict the motions of the heavenly bodies with perfect accuracy for ever. Indeed, it is almost certain that there are others which are now and will, perhaps, remain always unknown to man, which would be necessary for that purpose. Such rules might, if known to us, enable us to predict that on one particular day, out of many billions, the sun would not rise, just as we are at present able to predict that on one day, out of several thousands, its light will be interrupted by the moon. It may be that these rules will hold good only for a time, and that, at a given moment, the human race may suddenly find itself sprawling in the dark—destitute of all science, and ignorant of the means of getting any. Yet, up to the moment of the occurrence of such a catastrophe, our certainty of the permanence of the present state of things would be just as complete and quite as reasonable as it is at the present moment. Hence science can claim no other certainty than one which is at once negative and hypothetical. It treats that which does not appear as if it did not exist, and it invariably assumes the adequacy and permanence of the rules which it applies. With the possibility that these rules may be transitory or inadequate guides to truth, it does not concern itself.

The limited and conditional nature of the certainty which science can claim to establish, in reference to material objects, is the true, and is a sufficient answer to the fears which the attempt to establish a science of history inspires. If the sciences, which are acknowledged to be such in the strictest sense of the word, disclose to us neither nature bound in fate,

nor objects governed by irresistible laws, nor a set of agents yielding obedience to irresistible impulses, nor a fatal necessity having a realm which constantly threatens to enclose us, why should we fear its application to human affairs? If, for anything that science teaches to the contrary, the heavenly bodies may be rational beings, moving in their orbits from their own choice, can it be said that the attempt to discover general rules, by the help of which limited and conditional predictions respecting human conduct may be made, involves any danger to morality?

Such a question ought not to be discussed without a more explicit acknowledgment of its importance than most of those who believe in the possibility of constructing a science of history think fit to make. It is impossible to read their writings without a constant revolt against the harsh indifference with which they treat the common sentiments of mankind, and the eagerness with which they adopt, on every occasion, forms of speech of which it is difficult to say whether they are most remarkable for inaccuracy or offensiveness. It may be possible to establish the consistency of what is true in their opinions with those great moral doctrines which give to life all its value and dignity, but this can be done only by a process too intricate to be performed by persons who have not made a special study of the question. The broad obvious inference which most of their writings suggest, and which a vast majority of their readers would draw, is, that man deserves neither praise nor blame for his conduct; that he has no power over his own actions; that he is a helpless puppet who ought to be contemplated not as an individual at all, but (to use Mr. Goldwin Smith's expressions) as a link in a chain, or a grain in a mass; and that the only objects which can enlist the sympathies of persons enlightened enough to admit their own insignificance are vague abstractions, called by such names as progress and civilization. It is very seldom that any attempt is made by the writers referred to, to disconnect such conclusions from the premisses which they lay down. They usually write as if they felt that come what would of morality and all that is connected with it, the one thing needful for all mankind was to sit at their feet and accept their doctrines.

The offensiveness of such conduct, to say nothing of its arrogance, cannot be exaggerated. If this were really the conclusion to which science leads us it would be fatal to the existence of science itself; for it would destroy any interest which a man of spirit could feel in it. Such a man, on discovering that conscience, honour, and moral responsibility were mere phantoms, would probably spend the last relics of personality and free-will in expressing his contempt for the inanimate universe of which he formed an inanimate morsel, and in resolving that the eternal laws which had taken the trouble to make the world should have the satisfaction of managing and mending it without his assistance.

Such considerations as these make it doubly important to clear up, if possible, the confusion with which the question has been surrounded, and

to show that whatever may be the fears and hopes of the disputants, and whatever may be the inferences which their language would bear, and which they may wish it to bear, the interests of morality are, in reality, altogether unaffected by the debate. It is necessary to point this out, in order to guard against the impression that the following observations are biased by any leaning towards the consequences which those who maintain the arguments against which they are directed, are anxious to avert.

The argument of those who, with the avowed object of protecting the interests of morality, deny the possibility of constructing a science of history, may be thus stated:—They say, where there is no regularity there can be no science; but where there is no irregularity there can be no freedom, and where there is no freedom there can be no morality. In so far, therefore, as freedom implies irregularity in the conduct of free agents, it excludes the possibility of science. Now every man is conscious that he is a free agent; and the proposition that men are free, means that before they act they have it in their power to act in either of two or more ways; but if they have and use this power it must be impossible beforehand to predict the manner in which they will use it; therefore history cannot be formed into a science, because if it were it would enable us to predict human actions.

Many of the propositions of which this argument is composed are undeniably true. No one has ever succeeded in persuading people to doubt either that freedom is essential to morality, or that men are conscious of being free agents in the sense stated. Nor is it more doubtful, that as the object of science is the classification of phenomena, science must end where irregularity begins; that is, where the facts with which it deals come to be no longer susceptible of classification; but it is by no means true that where there is no irregularity there can be no freedom, or that if men have and use the power, before they act, of acting in either of several ways, it must be impossible beforehand to predict the manner in which they will use it. There is no contradiction in terms between regularity and freedom. If a man is perfectly free to get up every morning at six o'clock or not, he is as free to get up regularly as to get up irregularly at that hour, and, indeed, his doing so invariably would usually be accepted as evidence of great strength of resolution. The opposition, if any, must be inferred from experience, and the attempt to treat history as a science is nothing but an appeal to this test, and is perfectly consistent (though those who make it do not seem to think so) with the most explicit recognition of the fact that men are not misled by the universal testimony of their own consciousness in supposing themselves to have the power of choosing between different courses of conduct.

The nature of scientific certainty in reference to physical studies has been already referred to, and it has been shown to denote nothing more than the fact that evidence has been collected in reference to certain

subjects sufficient to remove from the minds of those who study it all doubt as to the conclusions to which it points. If, therefore, instances can be given in which any one acquainted with all the facts of the case would be quite sure as to the course which a man, admitted to be free, would take, it will follow that scientific certainty as to the course of human action is not inconsistent with its freedom. Such instances are endless. A man is deeply in love with a woman, who returns his affection. They are engaged to be married; no opposition is made to the marriage; every circumstance is favourable to it. The service has actually begun, and the clergyman says, "Wilt thou take this woman to be thy wedded wife?" No doubt the man is perfectly free to say No, and has it in his power to do so; but does any human being doubt that if he has no reason whatever for drawing back, and the most ardent desire to go on, he will, if he lives, and if no physical impediment intervenes, say Yes? The certainty is precisely the same in kind, and nearly the same in degree, as the certainty that the sun will rise to-morrow. It is founded on the expectation, produced by an infinite quantity of experience, that when a man has the power of doing what he earnestly wishes to do, and has no reason to refrain, and is not prevented from doing it, he will do it. This is an unequivocal instance of predicting the act of a free agent, his freedom being the very ground of the confidence with which the prediction is made; and this power of prediction is all that is required in order to render possible a science of history.

Of course the case taken is simple in the extreme; but the simplicity of the case affects nothing but the ease with which the operation of prediction may be performed. If a highly complicated case be taken, the result will be exactly the same, though the difficulty of arriving at it will, of course, be greatly increased. When Shakspeare was writing the *Tempest*, could it have been predicted what words he would write down next after "Like the baseless fabric of this vision?" The specific prediction could not, of course, have been made by any human creature; but if any one had been able to watch the thoughts suggested to Shakspeare's mind, and to appreciate the various half-conscious reasonings which led him to pass judgment on them as they rose before him, and had thus followed the train of association, whatever it may have been, which preceded the composition of "leaves not a wrack behind," he would have had no difficulty in predicting the act of will by virtue of which it was written down, although the poet would have been perfectly conscious, and rightly conscious, of his power to write or not to write as he pleased. The phrase itself proves this assertion—if we know how a man pleases, we can infallibly predict how he will act, because he is free to act as he pleases.

Apart from this general evidence, it ought to be noticed that it is absolutely impossible to prove that any act is altogether irregular, that is to say, that it is so unlike all other acts that no formula can ever be

devised which will enable others to view it as one of a series. If an event happened once in every ten thousand years, it would be regular in the same sense as if it happened every other minute ; and how can it possibly be affirmed of any act whatever that no other act of the same sort will ever occur ? If such an affirmation could be made, how would its truth affect the freedom of the act ? The only evidence—and that evidence is conclusive—that an act is free, is the consciousness possessed by the agent before he performs it, that he has the power to perform it or not ? How can that be affected by the circumstance that after the lapse of ten thousand years, some one else either will or will not be placed in the same or an analogous position ?

These considerations, put under various shapes, are familiar enough; but they are generally urged, and wrongly urged, as objections to freedom. They are supposed to prove that the alternative power of action which we are conscious of possessing is delusive. In reality they prove nothing of the sort. They show only that there is reason to believe that it is exercised in a regular and not in a capricious manner, and, as has been already observed, if people are free, they are as free to act regularly as to act irregularly, and the expectations of observers as to their acting in the one way or the other must, if they are reasonable, be regulated by experience alone. Historical science is nothing more than a collection of the results of observation systematically classified.

The delusions arising from the metaphorical language in which the results of physical science are expressed, and especially that most pernicious notion that it establishes the proposition that the material universe is affirmatively known to be a collection of inanimate agents governed by necessary laws, have made the notion of the regular action of free and rational creatures so unfamiliar that most people find considerable difficulty in understanding how an act which can be predicted can be made the subject of praise or blame. Why, it is asked, do you praise or blame men for doing what you always knew they would do ? The question shows that those who ask it have not considered the real nature and origin of praise and blame. It will be found upon strict examination that they attach not to acts which are or are supposed to be irregular, but to acts which are or are supposed to be voluntary and personal, whether they are capable of being predicted or not, and this is an ultimate fact of our nature which at present can no more be accounted for than the fact that upon certain occasions we feel love and hatred, pain and pleasure. The steps in the inquiry are as follows :—

In the first place, it is not every incident which is the subject of praise or blame, but actions only as distinguished from occurrences. The characteristic of actions is that the external and visible transaction is supposed to be preceded by the putting forth of an internal invisible energy like that of which every man is conscious when he acts, and for which we have no other name than an act of the will. Whenever we have grounds to believe that such an act of the will, coupled with an intelligent per-

ception of its natural effects, has preceded any visible action, we praise or blame that action if it has any assignable connection with the production of happiness or misery, without any reference to the power which others may have of predicting what occurs. This is illustrated with remarkable completeness in the difference of the views which we take of occurrences in our own lives, in the lives of other men, in those of animals, and in the relations of inanimate matter. With regard to ourselves, praise and blame are unhesitating and complete. We have before us all the facts, and if we use our means of knowledge honestly we have usually no difficulty in saying whether our conduct had deserved praise or blame; but this depends entirely on the two questions whether the incident to be considered was an action or a mere occurrence, and whether if it was an action, it was one of which we knew the nature. As to the fact that there was or was not an act of the will, there can be no doubt, because we have before us the best evidence, namely, the direct testimony of our own consciousness. With regard to others, our judgment is less satisfactory, because our means of knowledge are much inferior; but the general similarity between the acts of different men is so strong that in all ordinary cases we have no hesitation in concluding that acts which would have been voluntary in us were voluntary in them. With regard to animals, there is a degree of difficulty which illustrates exactly the nature of the evidence which we require in order to praise or blame an action. We are by no means indifferent to the courage and fidelity of the dog, or to the cruelty of the cat, but it would be an abuse of terms to say that we thoroughly praise or blame them. If praise or blame depended on the contingency or irregularity of actions, it would be difficult to say that they were not as appropriate to the dog who defends his master, or to the cat who tortures a mouse, as to men or women. It is at least as difficult for any one to foretell what exact amount of danger or pain will drive away a mastiff from a robber as it would be to make a similar prophecy about his owner; but if the question depends on the existence of an act of the will, coupled with an intelligent perception of the facts, the hesitating, qualified character of the sentiments which the conduct of a dog or an elephant excites is easily explained by the incomplete, unsatisfactory nature of the evidence which we have as to the mental operations of animals. Their conduct shows some but not all the traces of will which we find in human action, and some but not all the signs of intelligence. Hence, our praise and blame of their conduct is given *sub modo*, and not unreservedly. Inanimate matter presents the converse case to that of the conduct of other men. We have absolutely no grounds for attributing to material objects any power of action at all. We know nothing about them except the occurrences which present themselves, and accordingly we neither praise nor blame any material object whatever. It may, no doubt, be said that this is because we can foretell with accuracy the various incidents which will occur to matter, and this, as has been already observed, is the great argument of those who deny the possibility

of predicting human actions because they think it essential to morality to do so. Such persons, however, should recollect that it is by no means true that we can always foretell the various motions of matter, and it is certain that millions of persons who never think of making it the subject of either praise or blame are altogether ignorant that its movements can be foretold. No one blames dice or packs of cards, yet the combinations which they present are all but universally looked upon as the typical illustrations of uncertainty. No one ever thought of claiming for human conduct a greater degree of irregularity than belongs to cards or dice. No theory demands that it must be considered to be more uncertain which of several courses a man will take than it is whether one or the other of the twenty-one possible combinations will be presented on throwing the dice, yet no one ever attributed free-will to them.

The result is, that the condition which must be fulfilled before any incident can be praised or blamed is, that it should be an action, and not merely an occurrence. The quantity of praise or blame to be given to an action depends almost entirely upon the question whether it is done willingly or under compulsion. There is a common, though inaccurate, notion that the reason of this is, that compulsion forcibly deprives conduct of its irregularity, which would otherwise be irregular, and so enables it to be predicted, and deprives it of its moral character; but upon closer examination into the meaning of compulsion, this will be found not to be the case.

The only safe guide in such inquiries is the common use of language, for by the words which they use when they are acting and not speculating, men record their impressions of what passes in their own minds with a completeness and truth which is rarely attainable when they consciously sit down to perform that task, usually for the purpose of supporting preconceived opinions. Applying this principle, it will be found that the words "voluntary" and "compulsory" are not formal opposites. The one does not affirm what the other denies. "Voluntary" is properly opposed to "involuntary," and an involuntary action is in strictness of speech not an action at all. A man who throws about his limbs in a convulsive fit is a patient, and not an agent; and it would be an abuse of language to say that he moved them under compulsion. The muscles contract independently of his will, and he no more deserves praise or blame for the consequences produced by their contraction than a bullet deserves praise or blame for killing a man. On the other hand, it would, both in common language and even in law, be perfectly correct to speak of a person being compelled by threats or by torture to give up his property.

Thus compulsion does not supersede the action of the will, but is collateral to it; and it will be found on examination to imply that some motive is applied to the person who is the subject of it sufficiently strong and painful to induce him voluntarily to do something which he dislikes, or forego something which he likes. The formal opposite of compulsion

is willingness. Where a man does an act willingly, he deserves the full praise or blame which belongs to acts of that class. Where he does it under compulsion, the praise or blame is greatly diminished. If, for example, a man unwillingly tells a lie to save his life, no one would blame him, or, at least, they would blame him for nothing worse than having fallen short of a heroic standard of virtue; but if he told it willingly, even under the very same circumstances, the case would be different. It would be said that, though the lie itself might have been excused, the willingness to tell it showed that he was a liar by nature, and deserved to be looked upon as such. Neither compulsion nor willingness affects the question of the regularity of conduct. Their presence affects only the difficulty of predicting its direction, which it may either diminish or increase. Of some men it might be predicted that they would lie to any extent, under no greater compulsion than that of a risk of losing 5*l.* by speaking the truth. Others would, perhaps, equivocate if the risk was 500*l.* or 5,000*l.*, and others would sooner die than lie at all. Those who knew a man well would have little difficulty in saying to which of these classes he belonged, and of predicting his conduct accordingly.

The result is, that we praise and blame voluntary actions, and that the praise and blame are increased if the actions are willing and diminished if they are compulsory, and that we do so irrespectively of their being regular or irregular. This, however, ascertains only the sort of actions, to which, and the rule by which, we distribute praise and blame. It leaves untouched the ultimate reason why we praise or blame at all. Why, for instance, do we blame a man who willingly commits a cruel murder? This question is precisely analogous to hundreds of others, which it is equally impossible to answer. Why do we feel any sympathy with, or interest in, others, or even in ourselves? Why do we hate or love? Why do we see an object when our eyes are wide open and it is straight in front of them? We can only say that human nature is constituted so, and not otherwise; and that when we are once made aware of a thoroughly wicked action willingly done by the agent, we blame it, just as we shrink from pain or welcome pleasure. In different times and countries, different classes of actions may produce this feeling; but, so far as we know, there is not, and never was, any human society in which the feeling is not produced by some forms of conduct or other. Viewed in this light, praise and blame may well be awarded to actions, independently of the question whether they can or cannot be predicted—a question which experience only can decide.

This conclusion may be strengthened by considerations of a more familiar kind. Notwithstanding the importance which many persons attach to the essential irregularity of human conduct, there are no parts of it on which it is so difficult to pass any sort of moral judgment as those which ought, if irregularity is essential to their existence, to be the strongest proofs of the existence of freedom and morality. There

are actions which are entirely arbitrary and capricious, for which no cause whatever can be assigned. According to the views of the antagonists of historical science, such acts ought to be considered as assertions of the most glorious and characteristic prerogatives of human nature, but this is not the way in which they are regarded in fact. Men who habitually assert these prerogatives, and whose conduct under given circumstances it is practically as well as theoretically impossible to predict, are to be found in thousands at Hanwell and Colney Hatch, but they are considered not as the freest and wisest of their race, but as the victims of the most grievous of all diseases. Of all characters, that of a capricious man is the one with which it is most difficult to deal. To say of a person, "You never can tell how he'll take a thing," is anything but a recommendation of him. On the other hand, it is a common thing to praise a person for being rational and consistent in his behaviour. What do these words imply? Certainly not less than this, that the regularity of a man's conduct, and therefore the ease with which its course may be predicted, is in direct proportion to his wisdom. The general conclusion seems to be that we regulate our own actions by the free exertion of a power which is an ultimate fact in our nature like the power of sight or touch; that as far as we can judge, we exert this free power in a regular manner, so that if any one knew the exact state of the mind and the exact limits of the powers of others immediately before they acted, he could foretell the direction in which they would act; that according to the direction in which this power is exerted, our actions are good or bad, and we deserve praise or blame; and that this praise or blame is awarded, not because of any contingency about actions before they are performed, but because, by the constitution of our nature we praise actions which we consider good, and blame those which we consider bad; and that the amount of praise or blame awarded depends mainly on the degree in which the actions are done willingly or under compulsion.

It may tend to set these conclusions more clearly before the imagination of some persons, if it is assumed that a supposition, already referred to more than once, were proved to be true. Suppose that it were shown that, in point of fact, the different members of the solar system were, as some of the ancients supposed, living creatures. Suppose we knew that it was a distinct effort to the sun to shine, and to the planets to revolve; that they had temptations to rest, and were aware of the importance of not giving way to them. Is there any one astronomical proposition which would become less true than it is at present? Would anything else result than that we should superinduce upon the feeling of interest and satisfaction with which we look at present on the solar system, a feeling of moral sympathy and admiration for the bodies which compose it? Or, to put the converse case, let us suppose that the sun and moon, being constituted upon principles altogether different from ours, nevertheless shared with us the power of observation and calculation, and subjected ourselves to an examination like that to which we subject them. Suppose that,

looking down upon the earth, not metaphorically but really, they were to watch the different motions of men, and try to devise formulas by which they might predict them. Are we able to say that the undertaking would be hopeless, or that it would be more difficult to frame some general rules by the aid of which they might arrive at conclusions respecting our conduct, than it was for us to frame a rule which should apply equally to the motion of a grain of dust and that of a sun?

If they were altogether ignorant of our wants and objects—if our gestures and voices were unmeaning, and our passions unknown to them—might not they calculate our motions with the same precision which we apply to them, and look on us as mere brute inanimate matter, because they knew nothing of our emotions? They might in this way construct a science of our motions, and it might be a perfectly true one; but they would be much mistaken if they drew from that fact the inference that we were the mere slaves of a blind destiny. If our freedom and moral responsibility would be unaffected by such a calculation, they cannot be more affected by it if it proceeds from ourselves. They stand on their own basis, and the fear that a science of history, if it is ever constructed, will overthrow them, is just as reasonable as the fear that a good nautical almanac will enslave the stars and the tides.

The speculative and abstract view of the question comprises only one division of it. What the science of history, if it ever exists, will be like, is a question of great interest, the impartial consideration of which would do much to dispel the alarm with which the possibility of its existence is regarded. Much light is also thrown on the question by the general character of political economy and statistics, the only subjects relating to human conduct which have as yet been thrown into a scientific shape. These points will be considered in a future number.

The Stage Queen and the Squire.

CHAPTER IV.

MASTER ROWLAND GOES UP TO LONDON.

In the green-room of one of the great London theatres—David Garrick's, perhaps—the stage company and their friends were waiting the call-boy and the rising of the curtain.

As strange boards as any—as broad contrasts. Here a king, with his crown cast down; there a beggar, with his wallet laid aside. But kings and beggars are not affording the glaring discrepancies of Hogarth's "Olympus in a Barn," but suggesting and preserving the distinctions far below the buskins, the breastplate, the sandals, the symars. Here are heroes, with the heroism only skin deep; and peers, like their graces of Bolton and Wharton, with infinitely less of the lofty, self-denying graces and the ancient Quixotism of chivalry, than the most grovelling of ploughmen. The Literary Club is not yet formed, nor has Davis founded his reputation for cups of tea and pretty Mrs. Davis; but here are specimens of Lanky and Beau—learned, gracious, and winning in their philosophy and frolics. Ah, me! that they should have worn such sorry stains on their shields! Here is the awful manager unable to shake off his sense of power and his double existence:

"On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting,
'Twas only that when he was off he was acting."

And here is the poor author, strutting abroad in his "Tyrian bloom, satin grain, and garter blue-silk breeches," and ready to hide in the next tavern when the game is up.

Among the crowd, Lady Betty is biding her time, very *nonchalant* and a little solitary in her state. She is accustomed to the *dramatis personæ*, professional and otherwise; and ladies who are independent, exclusive, and inflexible, however admired and respected, are generally left to enjoy their own opinions unmolested and at their leisure, whether behind the stage curtain or elsewhere.

Just then a country gentleman, whose murrey coat has a certain country cut, while his complexion breathes of hay-fields and hedge sides, is introduced, gazes round, and steps up to her. Mrs. Betty cries out directly, "La!"—an exclamation not a whit vulgar in her day—"the Justice!" And she holds forth both her hands. "How are dear Mrs. Prissy and Mrs. Fiddy? Did the silks suit? But I need not ask; I had their dear delightful violet-scented letter. Have you come up to town for any time, sir? I wish prosperity to your business."

He has not held such kind, unaffected, friendly hands since they parted; he has only once before held a hand that could have led a Jaffier to confess his conspiracy—that could have clung to a crushed man, and striven to raise him when calamity, like a whirlwind, cast him down and swept him away.

The squire is sensibly moved, and Mrs. Betty vindicates her womanliness by jumping at a conclusion and settling in her own mind that his brain is addled with this great London—its politicians, its mohawks, its beggars in Axe Lane, its rich tradesmen in Cranbourne Alley, its people of quality, fashion, and taste in their villas at Twickenham.

He asks if she is on in Belvidera, and when he hears that it is another actress's benefit, and that she has only consented to appear in a secondary part in a comedy of Sir John's, who is now a great castle-builder, he does not trouble himself to enter a box; at which she is half flattered, half perplexed. He waits, hot and excited, until her short service is over. He will not call upon her at her lodgings, because, in his delicacy, he has so keen a remembrance of her exposed position—a butt for scandal.

There—there in the corner behind the curtain, bounded by the refreshment table, and filled with the prompter's monotonous drawl, near those loungers, those fashionables, those professors of what is said to be, to all except the few, a branding, blighting profession—far, far from his barley ripe for the mowing, his boxwood peacocks, his sunset shining beneath his heavy porch with its pilgrim's seat, his precise house-keeper who kept mistress Prissy and Fiddy in awe and slightly daunted himself, his grey-haired Hal and his buxom milkmaids—far from old madam—courted, worshipped Granny; the vicar, pedantic, formal, and very worthy; young madam, brisk, hot, and genial; and his forsaken charmers Prissy and Fiddy, sometimes pert, sometimes coy, always guileless as lambkins,—the squire told his tale of true love. The man threw down the costs and besought Mrs. Betty Lumley, Lady Betty, to renounce the stage, forsake fame, quit studies, rehearsals, opening-nights, and concluding curtseys amidst the cheers of thousands, to go down with him to rural Larks' Hall, and sigh like Lady Mary's heroine for the dear town and the absence of all rational interests and occupations, or wake up to millions of fresh, cheap, ever-varying, never-failing pleasures; to read "sermons in stones" and homilies in honeysuckle, grow younger, happier, and better every day, and die like Lady Loudun in her hundredth year, universally regretted—above all, be a partner to a selfish man: that was his chief object; to fill up the gulf which had yawned in the market-place of his existence since that night at Bath, and render his life double—double in its joys, double in its sorrows.

It was a primitive proceeding, and the scene was not patriarchal. Lady Betty was amazed at the man's assurance, simplicity, and loyalty. He spoke plainly—almost bluntly—but very forcibly. It was no slight or passing passion which had brought the squire, a gentleman of a score and more of honourable descents, to seek such an audience-chamber to

sue a pasteboard queen, and to lout among the host of idle, insolent, unruly pretenders to the favour of the famous actress. It was no weak love which had dislodged him from his old resting-place, and pitched him to this dreary distance.

Mrs. Betty was taken "all in a heap;" she had heard many a love-tale, but never one with so manly a note. Shrewd, sensitive Mrs. Betty was bewildered and confounded, and in her hurry she made a capital blunder. What! should she leave her own domain for a comparative stranger? Was the man mad? Did his old-fashioned, country pride reckon the name of Madam Parnell so mighty an equivalent for the title of Lady Betty? Should she take him at an advantage, when the poor, honest, magnanimous, foolish gentleman cast his squiredom, his Larks' Hall, his afflicted old mother, sulky brother and sister, and quaking little nieces, at her feet? Should she grieve sweet little Mistresses Prissy and Fiddy? No, no. She dismissed him summarily, saw how white he grew, and heard how he stooped to ask if there were no possible alternative, no period of probation to endure, no achievement to perform by him, Master Parnell, of Lark's Hall, a great man down in his own district of Somersetshire: she waved him off the faster because she became affrighted at his humility; and got away in her chair, and wrung her hands, and wept all night in the long summer twilight, and sat pensive and sick for many days.

In time, Mrs. Betty resumed her profession; but languidly: she played to disappointed houses, and cherished always, with more romance, the shade of the brave, trustful, Somersetshire squire and antiquary. Suddenly she adopted the resolution of retiring from the stage in the summer of her popularity, and living on her savings and her poor young brother's bequest. Her tastes were simple; why should she toil to provide herself with luxuries? She had no one now for whose old age she could furnish ease, or for the aims and accidents of whose rising station she need lay by welcome stores; she had not even a nephew or niece to tease her. She would not wear out the talents a generous man had admired on a mass of knaves and villains, coxcombs and butterflies; she would not expose her poor mind and heart to further deterioration. Ah! she should have kept them more spotless for the sake of Him who doubly owned them. It was true, what Master Rowland had preached to his nieces. How terrible it would be if she were dashed to pieces over the precipice, after all! She would fly from the danger: she would retire, and board with her cousin Ward, and help her with a little addition to her limited income and a spare hand in her small family; and she would jog-trot onwards for the rest of her life, so that when she came to die, Mrs. Prissy and Mrs. Fiddy would have no cause to be ashamed that so inoffensive, inconspicuous, respectable a person had once been asked to stand to them in the dignified relation of aunt, to command the starched housekeeper at Larks' Hall, reign in dining-room and parlour, sun herself among the stocks and sunflowers in the garden, drop into the vicarage at all hours,

hear the first waits at Christmas, and sleep in the Parnells' aisle, beside the effigy of the knight who had been a squire to Guy of Warwick. The public vehemently combated Mrs. Betty's verdict, in vain; they were forced to lament during twice nine days their vanished favourite, who had levanted so unceremoniously beyond the reach of their good graces.

CHAPTER V.

MRS. BETTY TRAVELS DOWN INTO SOMERSETSHIRE.

A FORMAL but friendly letter came to Mrs. Betty, when her life was one of long dusty exertion, and her heart was very thirsty and parched. You see, the shabby-genteel world and the tradesman's life, unless in exceptional cases of great wealth, was a different affair a hundred and forty or fifty years ago from what it is now. The villas at Twickenham, the rural retreats, the gardens, the grottos, the books, the harpsichords, the water-colour drawings, belonged to the quality, or to the literary lions: to Lady Mary, or Pope, Horace Walpole, or his young friends the Berrys. The half-pay officer's widow, the orphan of the bankrupt in the South Sea business, the wife and family of the moderately flourishing haberdasher, or coach-builder, or upholsterer,—the tobacconist rose far above the general level—were cooped up in the city dwellings, and confined to gossip, fine clothes, and good eating if they could afford them, patching and paring if they could not. A walk in the City Gardens, a trip to Richmond Hill, the shows, Mr. Steele's *Christian Hero*, *An Advice to a Daughter*, De Foe's *History of the Plague*, were their mental delectation.

But Mrs. Betty had persevered; for she had the soul of a martyr: she had resigned herself to sinking down into the star of cousin Ward's set, who went on holidays to the play, and being mostly honest, fat, and fatuous, or jaunty and egotistical folk, admired the scenery and the dresses, but could no more have made a play to themselves than they could have drawn the cartoons. She helped cousin Ward, not only with her purse, but with a kinswoman's concern in her and hers: she assisted to wash and dress the children of a morning; she took a turn at cooking in the middle of the day; she helped to detain Master Ward at the tea-table, and to keep his wig and knee-buckles from too early an appearance and too thorough a soaking of his self-conceit and wilfulness at his tavern; and she heard the lads their lessons, while she darned their frills before the hot supper.

Then arrived the summons, over which Mrs. Betty, a little worn by voluntary adversity, shed "a power" of joyful tears. To travel down into Somersetshire, and stroll among the grass in the meadows and the gorse on the commons, which she had not seen for twelve months; to feed the calves, and milk the cows, and gather the eggs, and ride Dapple, and tie up the woodbine, and eat syllabub in a bower; to present "great

frieze coats" and "riding-hoods" to a dozen of the poorest old men and women in the parish; to hear prayers in a little gray church, through whose open windows ivy nodded, and before whose doors trees arched in vistas; to see her sweet little Prissy and Fiddy, who had taken such a fancy to her, and with whom she was so captivated, and the vicar, and madam, and Granny, and find them all perfectly agreeable, and not slighting her or doubting her because she had been a woman of fashion and an actress; and Master Rowland well disposed of elsewhere; Larks' Hall deserted by its master—the brave, generous, enamoured squire—heigho! Notwithstanding, that was the clinching clause in the programme: for, as may have been seen, Mrs. Betty, for all her candour, good humour, and cordiality, had her decent pride, and would not have thrown herself at any man's head—not even at a rejected suitor's, after the fashion in which great authors sometimes expose the infatuation of young girls, both in the early Georges' time and in our own. But then, to be sure, Mrs. Betty was not a foolish young girl, but a fine woman in the summer of her charms.

Somersetshire, in spite of Bath, was as antediluvian a hundred and fifty years ago as the lanes and coombes of Devonshire. Larks' Hall, Foxholes, Bearwood, the vicarage of Mosely, and their outlying acquaintances, their yeomen and their labourers, lived as old-fashioned and hearty a life as if the battle of Sedgemoor had never been fought; nay, in some respects, as if Alfred was still dealing strokes against the Danes.

Down in Somersetshire, among its orchards, nutteries, and blackberry thickets, poor little Mrs. Fiddy was drooping, as girls would pine sometimes, even in the days of Will Shakespeare, ere cloth-yard shafts were abolished from merry England, when there were still mayings among the hyacinths, and milkmaids' dances under the thorns, and mumming when the snow fell. And Dick Ashbridge shot and fished in the most disconsolate abandonment, though the girl yet ran past him "like a ghost" when the beetle and bat were abroad and he was still mooning about the vicarage meadows. Fiddy yet protested stoutly, for all her weakness—

"There's many a bolder lad
Will woo me any summer's day;"

And neither of them knew for certain, and nobody could predict exactly, that she would live to wed Dick, bear him children, and leave him a sorrowful widower, whose destiny was fulfilled and his heart chastened—not torn; who was a placid, cheerful, country gentleman, that could look forward with a soft smile (he, the restless, lively Dick of old!) when the organ was playing in the church, or his daughters lifting their ballads by the fireside, to the churchyard corner where his Fiddy lay waiting for him. No; nor could the good folk in Somersetshire understand how closely Lady Betty and little Fiddy were bound up together, and how little Fiddy was to return Lady Betty's kindness hugely in the days when the little girl should be the teacher and the fine woman the scholar, and the lesson to be learnt came from regions beyond the stars.

In the meantime, Fiddy was a sick, capricious, caressed darling in a cambric cap and silk shawl, on whom fond friends were waiting lovingly; for whom Prissy was content to be set aside; for whose delicate appetite madam was constantly catering; for whose increase of strength the vicar was hourly leaving his study, pen in hand, to inquire; for whose general refreshment and entertainment uncle Rowland was daily appearing with game, fruit, and toys from Bath, Bridgwater, or Wells; whom nobody in the world, not even the doctor, the parish clerk, or the housekeeper at Larks' Hall, dreamt of subjecting to the wholesome medicine of contradiction—unless Granny, when she came in with her staff in her hand, laughed at their excess of care, and ordered them to leave off spoiling that child: but Granny herself, too, let fall a tear from her dim eyes when she read the register of the child's age in the family Bible.

"Ah!" sighs whimsical little Mrs. Fiddy, "if only Lady Betty were here! Great, good, kind, clever, funny, beautiful Lady Betty, who cured me that night at Bath, papa and mamma, I would be well again. Prissy will tell you how she nursed me. Uncle Rowland will describe how she revived me. She knows the complaint; she has had it herself; and her face is so cheering, her wit so enlivening, and she reads the lessons as solemnly and sweetly, almost like his reverence there. O mamma! Prissy, send for Mrs. Betty; she is so excellent, she will come at once: she does not play now; the prints say so. She must weary without her occupation, dear heart; and she will be the better of the country air. Send for Mrs. Betty to Moseley."

Madam was in a difficulty. An actress at the vicarage! And Master Rowland had been so rash; he had dropped hints, which, along with his hurried visit to London, had instilled dim, dark suspicions into the minds of his appalled relations of the whirlpool he had just coasted, they knew not how: they could not believe the only plain, palpable solution of the fact. And Granny had inveighed acrimoniously, for her against women of fashion and all public characters, ever since uncle Rowland took that unlucky jaunt to town, whence he returned as glum and dogged as a rejected suitor of a younger brother, an usher, an author, or a half-pay lieutenant—anybody but the portly squire of Larks' Hall. But then, again, how could the mother deny her ailing Fiddy? And this brilliant Mrs. Betty from the gay world might possess some talisman unguessed by the quiet folks at home; since surely little Fiddy had no real disease, no settled pain: she only wanted change, pleasant company, and diversion, and would be plump again and strong again in no time. And Mrs. Betty had retired from the stage; she was no longer a marked person: she might pass anywhere as Mrs. Lumley, who had acted with the utmost success and celebrity, and withdrawn at the proper moment, as soon as she could manage it, with the greatest dignity and discretion. And Master Rowland was arranging his affairs to make the grand tour in the prime of life: better late than never; and his absence would clear

away a monstrous objection. What would the vicar say? What would Granny say?

The vicar ruled his parish, and lectured in the church; but in the parsonage thought in a deliberate way, very much as madam did, and was only posed when old madam and young madam pulled him different ways.

And Granny? Why, to madam's wonder, Granny required no wheedling, but—apprised of the deliberation by the little minx Prissy, who in Fiddy's illness attended on Granny—sent for madam before she had the least idea that the proposal had been so much as mooted to old madam; and, either in her arbour or in her own room—for her daughter-in-law was so much flurried that she could never remember the precise locality—struck her stick on the ground in her determined way, and insisted that Mrs. Betty should be writ for forthwith, and placed at the head of the child's society. Granny, who had soundly rated fine ladies and literary women and recommended plain housewives and recluses of spinsters not two days before! It was very extraordinary; but Granny must have her way. Granny was never thwarted at Mosely. Not only the children paid her affectionate duty, and young madam did her half-grateful, half-vexed homage, but the vicar and Master Rowland deferred to her, in her widowhood and dependence, as grown men, and with little less grace and reverence than what she had taught them to practise when they were lads under tutelage: indeed she was the fully accredited mistress of Larks' Hall.

Granny had a history: she was born an heiress and had married a cousin of the same name, a kindly, handsome spendthrift, and bore with him through many sorrows. On her husband's death, his property, unentailed, was sold to pay the debts which covered it. Madam's own estate of Larks' Hall had been settled on herself, to pass to her younger son; the vicar was, in fact, the elder brother; yet, had he not been educated for the Church, presented with the living of Mosely, and provided with a wise, devoted mother, he would have been penniless. Madam made as fair an arrangement of her affairs as her abilities could contrive and her circumstances permit, and she executed her plan without suffering any interference with her sovereign will and pleasure. She transferred her life-rent of Larks' Hall to her younger son, burdening his inheritance during her life with a sum of money to be paid to his elder brother; and she herself took up her residence at the vicarage; because, as she said, the vicar was married already, and she could be of use to young madam, who had no experience and was harassed with anxiety about her weakly baby Fiddy; while her continuing at Larks' Hall would only prolong expenses which might be saved for a year or two, or tie up Master Rowland and prevent his marrying when his time came, besides mortifying those liberal and polite tastes, of which his mother was proud, as of his athletic figure and strong arm.

Therefore Granny, in reality, presided at the vicarage; not oppressively, for she was one of those sagacious magnates who are satisfied

with the substance of power without loving its show. Notwithstanding, she prevented the publication of more than two calf-skin volumes at a time of the vicar's sermons; she turned madam aside when she would have hung the parlour with gilt leather, in imitation of Foxholes ; and she restricted the little girls to fresh ribbons once a month, and stomachers of their own working. And so, when Granny decreed that Mrs. Betty was to be invited down to Moseley, there was no more question of the propriety of the measure than there would have been of an Act of Council given under the Tudors ; the only things left to order were the airing of the best bedroom, the dusting of the ebony furniture, and the bleaching on the daisies of old madam's diamond quilt.

Down to Somersetshire went Mrs. Betty, consoling cousin Ward with the gift of a bran new mantua and a promise of a speedy return, and braving those highwaymen who were for ever robbing King George's mail; but the long, light, midsummer nights were in their favour, and their mounted escort had to encounter no paladins of the road in scarlet coats and feathered hats—regular Dons and Signors : there were no obstacles to detain them more serious than a spiced travelling cup or a lost horseshoe.

What company might you not meet there on the great roads ! That was worth writing a book about. An enterprising lady did write such a book—*A Stage-coach Journey from London to Exeter*. It would not fill the page of a letter to-day. What variety of character might you not chance to meet ! A pair of wine-flushed, bold-eyed gentlemen, their periwigs shaken on one side, gambling with the cards cut on their knees ; a worthy woman whose daughter has been entrapped into a Fleet Street marriage, and who is inclined to confide to you her " peck of troubles ;" a wicked wife of Bath, who has got rid of her debts by the same summary process, and has the effrontery to boast of her knavery ; a zealous Whig tradesman, who has managed to be up in town at the death of the old fox Lovat, and is full of the edifying show ; a good man in his own hair and parson's bands ; one of the Wadham College brotherhood—Bible moths they term them ; yet their voices could have been heard at half a mile's distance while living, and ring still in our ears now they are dead. When he has left the coach he will ride sixty, seventy miles, for the pleasure of addressing the most clownish and savage of mobs, whose members even pelted a preacher with dead cats and hounded on them their fellows—the bull-dogs. Dick Wilson, grown a sloven over his beer, while no one will buy his landscapes with their glimpses of the poetry of Italy in the coolness and freshness of Old England, makes one of the rare company to be met with in the coaches in the genuine coach days !

Mrs. Betty's buoyant spirit rose with the fresh air, the green fields, and the sunshine. She was so obliging and entertaining to an invalid couple among her fellow-travellers, an orange nabob from India and his splendid wife, that they declared she had done them more good than they would derive from the Pump-room, the music, and the cards, to which

they were bound. They asked her address, and pressed her to pay them a visit; when they would have certainly adopted her, and bequeathed to her their plum. As it was, half a dozen years later, when, to her remorse, she had clean forgotten their existence, they astounded her by leaving her a handsome legacy; which, with the consent of another party concerned—one who greatly relished the mere name of the bequest, as a proof that no one could ever resist Lady Betty—she shared with a cross-grained grand-nephew whom the autocratic pair had cut off with a shilling.

In those coach-days, deadly quarrels grew and exploded, young love ripened and was pledged, and life favours were exchanged, in the course of a single journey over villainous roads, at hospitable, rollicking, way-side inns, and in constantly impending danger of common overturns, robberies, and murders.

CHAPTER VI.

BETWEEN MOSELY AND LARKS' HALL.

AT Moseley Mrs. Betty alighted at last, entered the wicket-gate, and approached the small, weather-stained, brick house; making her curtsey to madam, asking the vicar's blessing, though he was not twenty-five years her senior and scarcely so wise, hugging the little girls, particularly sick Fiddy, and showering upon them pretty, tasteful town treasures, which little country girls, sick and well, dearly love. There! Fiddy's eyes were glancing already; but she did not leave off holding Mrs. Betty's hand in order to try on her mittens, or turn the handle of the musical-box. And Mrs. Betty finally learned, with a mighty panic and palpitation, which she was far too sensible and stately a woman, with all her frankness, to betray, that the justice was not gone—that Master Rowland, in place of examining the newly-excavated Italian cities, or dabbling in state treason in France, was no farther off than Larks' Hall, confined there with a sprained ankle: nobody being to blame, unless it were Granny, who, contrary to her usual firmness, had detained Master Rowland to the last moment, or uncle Rowland himself, for riding his horse too near the edge of a sandpit, and endangering his neck as well as his shin-bones. However, Mrs. Betty did not cry out that she had been deceived, or screech distractedly, or swoon desperately (though the last was in her constitution), nor expose her old lover in any way; neither did she seem to be broken-hearted by the accident.

But Granny's reception of her was the great event of the day. Granny was a picture, in her gray gown and "clean white hood nicely plaited," seated in her wicker seat "fronting the south, and commanding the washing green"—this was Granny's special throne in fine weather, when the bees in the neighbouring hives were buzzing and booming over the beds of thyme—and only an interim resting-place of young madam's.

Here Granny was amusing herself picking gooseberries, which the notable Prissy was to convert into gooseberry-fool, one of the dishes projected to grace the town lady's supper, when Mrs. Betty was led towards her under the slanting rays of the afternoon sun.

It was always a trying moment when a stranger at Mosely was presented to old Madam Parnell. The Parnells had agreed, for one thing, that it would be most proper and judicious, as Mrs. Betty had quitted the stage—doubtless in some disappointment of its capabilities, or condemnation of the mode in which it was conducted, and the sole purpose which its lessons were likely to serve—to be chary in theatrical allusions, to drop the theatrical sobriquet Lady Betty, and hail their guest with the utmost ceremony and sincerity as Mrs. Lumley. But Granny turned upon her visitor a face still fresh, in its small, fine-furrowed compass, hailed her as Lady Betty on the spot, and emphatically expressed all the praise she had heard of her wonderful powers; regretting that she had not been in the way of witnessing them, and declaring that as they had escaped the snares and resisted the temptations of her high place, they did her the utmost honour, for they served to prove that her merits and her parts were equal. Actually, Granny behaved to Lady Betty as to a person of superior station, and persisted in rising and making room for the purpose of sharing with her the wicker seat; and there they sat, the old queen and the young—madam in her plaited hood, Lady Betty in her riding-hat, blushing and excited, yet always graceful, always winning—with the vicar and young madam, Prissy and Fiddy on their father's arms, and the vicarage dogs and cats, cocks and hens, wagging their tails, and purring, scraping, and cackling round them.

Young madam had been quite determined that, as uncle Rowland was so unfortunate as to be held by the foot at Larks' Hall from his tour, he should not risk his speedy recovery by hobbling over to Mosely, when she could go herself or send Prissy every morning to let him know how they were faring, and how the invalid was improving. But the very day after Mrs. Betty's arrival, old madam despatched Tim the message-boy, without letting any one in the vicarage know, to desire the squire to order out the old coach, and make a point of joining the family party either at dinner or at supper. Young madam was not perfect: she was sufficiently chagrined; but then the actress and the squire met so coldly, and little Fiddy was flushing up into a quiver of animation, and Mrs. Betty was delightful company, like generous wine, in the slumberous country parsonage.

It is pleasant to think of the doings of the Parnells, the witcheries of Mrs. Betty, and the despotism of old madam, during the next month. Indeed, Mrs. Betty was so reverent, so charitable, so kind, so gentle as well as blithe under depressing influences, and so witty under stagnation, that it would have been hard to have lived in the same house with her and proved to be her enemy: she was so easily gratified, so easily interested; she could suit herself to so many phases of this marvellous human nature.

She listened to the vicar's "argument" with edification, and hunted up his authorities with diligence. She scoured young madam's lutestring, and made it up in the latest and most elegant fashion of nightgowns, with fringes and buttons, such as our own little girls could match ; and this, with an entire dedication of the day, to which Jenny Green would never have been brought by wages and beer, even with the additions of a draught for her old grandmother, a cake for her sick brother, and Tim the message-boy's elder brother Amos to walk home with her when the nightingales were singing in the vicarage lane. She made hay with Prissy and Fiddy, and not only accomplished a finer cock than weak Fiddy and impatient Priss, but surpassed the regular haymakers. And she looked, oh ! so well in her haymaker's jacket and straw hat—though young madam was always saying that her shape was too large for the dress, and that the slight hollows in her cheeks were exaggerated by the shade thrown by the broad-brimmed flapping straw. But it must be but an inferior and counterfeit edition of a fine woman who does not fairly eclipse a little girl, even on her own ground.

Of course Mrs. Betty performed in the "Traveller" and "Cross Purposes," and gave riddles and sang songs round the hearth of a rainy evening, or about the cherry-wood table in the arbour of a cloudless twilight, much more pat than other people—that was to be looked for ; but then she also played at love after supper, loo and cribbage for a penny the game—deeds in which she could have no original superiority and supremacy—with quite as infectious an enthusiasm.

To let you into a secret, young madam was in horror at one time that Dick Ashbridge was wavering in his allegiance to her white rosebud, Fiddy ; so entralling was this scarlet pomegranate, this purple vine ; till Mrs. Betty suddenly turned upon the mad boy—to whom she had been very soft, saying that he was like her young brother Barty, dead among the sugar-canies and the mangoes of the Barbadoes—and said that he bore a greater resemblance to her cousin's second son Jack, and asked how old was he ? and did he not think of taking another turn at college ? This restored the boy to his senses in a trice, and she kissed Mrs. Fiddy twice over when she bade her good-night.

But old madam and Lady Betty were the chief pair of friends. Granny, with her own sway in her day, and her own delicate discrimination, acute intellect, and quick feelings, was a great enough woman not to be jealous of a younger queen, but to enjoy her exceedingly. Madam Parnell had seen the great world as well as Lady Betty, and never tired of reviving old recollections, comparing experiences, and tracing the fates of the children and grandchildren of the great men and women her contemporaries. The stirring details were more entertaining than any story-book, Prissy and Fiddy vowed over and over again. For this reason, Granny took a personal pride in Lady Betty's simplest feat, as well as in her intellectual crown, and put her through every stage of her own particular recipes for cream-cheese and pickled walnuts.

"The dickons!" cried a Somersetshire yeoman: "The Lon'on madam has opened the five-barred gate that beat all the other women's fingers, and gathered the finest elder-flowers, and caught the fattest chicken; and they tell me she has repeated verses to poor crazed Isaac, till she has lulled him into a fine sleep. 'Well done, Lon'on!' cries I; luck to the fine lady: I never thought to wish success to such a kind.' Granny, too, cried, "Well done, Lon'on! Luck to the fine lady!" If all Helens were but as pure, and true, and tender as Lady Betty!

Granny would have Lady Betty shown about among the neighbours, and maintained triumphantly that she read them, Sedleys, Ashbridges, and Harringtons, as if they were characters in a printed book—not that she looked down on them, or disparaged them in any way: she was far more tolerant than rash, inexperienced Prissy and Fiddy. And Granny ordered Lady Betty to be carried sight-seeing to Larks' Hall, and made minute arrangements for her to inspect Granny's old domain, from garret to cellar, from the lofty Usher-tree at the gate to the lowly

"Plaintain ribbed that heals the reapers' wound"

in the herb-bed. No cursory inspection would suffice her: the pragmatical housekeeper and the rosy milkmaids had time to lose their hearts to Lady Betty like the rest. Master Rowland, as in courtesy bound, limped with the stranger over his helmets and gauntlets, his wooden carvings, his black-letter distich; and, although she was not overflowing in her praise, she had seen other family pictures by Greuze, and she herself possessed a fan painted by Watteau, to which he was vastly welcome if he cared for a broken toy in his collection.

She fancied the head of one of the Roman emperors to be like his Grace of Montague; she had a very lively though garbled familiarity with the histories of the veritable Brutus and Cassius, Coriolanus, Cato, Alexander, and other mighty, picturesque, cobbled-up ancients, into whose mouths she could put appropriate speeches; and she accepted a loan of his *Plutarch's Lives*, "to clear up her classics," as she said merrily: altogether poor Squire Rowland felt that he had feasted at an intellectual banquet.

At last it was time to think of redeeming the pledge to cousin Ward; and, to Mrs. Betty's honour, the period came while Master Rowland was still too lame to leave Larks' Hall, except in his old coach, which he could not have out more than once a day, and while it yet wanted weeks to the softening, gladdening, overwhelming bounty of the harvest-home.

Then occurred the most singular episodes of perverseness and reiterated instances of inconsistency of which Granny had been found guilty in the memory of man, either as heiress of Larks' Hall or as old madam of the vicarage. At first she would not hear of Mrs. Betty's departure, and asked her to be her companion, during her son's absence, in his house of Larks' Hall, where all at once she announced that she meant to take up her temporary residence. She did not approve of its being committed

entirely to the supervision of Mrs. Prue, her satellite, the schoolmaster's daughter who used so many long words in cataloguing her preserves and was so trustworthy : Mrs. Prue would feel lonesome ; Mrs. Prue would take to gadding like the chits Prissy and Fiddy. No, she would remove herself for a year, and carry over her old man Morris along with her, and see that poor Rowley's goods were not wasted or his curiosities lost while he chose to tarry abroad.

Master Rowland stared, but made no objection to the invasion ; Mrs. Betty, after much private rumination and great persuasion, consented to the arrangement. Young madam was obliged to be ruefully acquiescent, though secretly irate at so preposterous a scheme ; the vicar, good man, to do him justice, was always ponderously anxious to abet his mother, and had, besides, like everybody else in the world, a sneaking kindness for Mrs. Betty ; the girls were privately charmed, and saw no end to the new element of breadth, brightness, and zest, in their little occupations and amusements.

When again, of a sudden, after the day was fixed for Master Rowland's departure, and the whole family were assembled in the vicarage parlour—in that window where the history of another “Joseph and his brethren” was painted on the middle panes, and across which a companion honeysuckle tree threw its shadow alike on the raised Eastern group, so pathetic yonder, so grotesque here, and on the book or the work pursued with such steadiness and simplicity under their patriarchal scrutiny—old madam fell a-crying and complaining that they were taking *her* son away from her—robbing her of him : she would never live to set eyes on him again—a poor old body of her years and trials would not survive another flitting. *She* had been fain to gratify some of his wishes ; but see if they would not destroy them both, mother and son, by their stupid narrow-mindedness and obstinacy.

Such a thing had never happened before. Who had ever seen Granny unreasonable and foolish ? The vicar slipped his hand to her wrist, in expectation that he would detect signs of hay-fever, though it was a full month too late for the complaint—there had been cases in the village—and was shaken off with sufficient energy for his pains.

“Mother,” exclaimed Master Rowland, haughtily, “I do understand you ; but I had a plain answer to a plain question months ago, and I will have no reversal to please you. Pity craved by an old woman’s weakness ! favours granted in answer to tears drawn from dim eyes ! I am not such a slave !”

The others were all clamouring round Granny, kissing her hand, kneeling on her footstool, imploring her to tell them what she wanted, what she would like best, what they could go and do for her ; only the squire spoke in indignant displeasure, and nobody attended to him but Mrs. Betty.

It did appear that the squire had been too fast in repelling advances which did not follow his mother’s appeal. Mrs. Betty gave no token—

Mrs. Betty stood pulling the strings of her cap, and growing first very red, and then ominously white, like any girl.

Perhaps the squire suspected that he had been too hasty, that he had not been grateful to his old mother, or generous to the woman who, however fine, courted, and caressed, was susceptible of a simple woman's anguish at scorn or slight. Perhaps there flashed on his recollection a certain paper in the *Spectator*, wherein a young lady's secret inclination towards a young gentleman is conclusively revealed, not by her advances to save his pride, but by her silence, her blushes, her disposition to swoon with distress when an opportunity is afforded her of putting herself forward to attract his notice—nay, when she is even urged to go so far as to solicit his regard.

Because Master Rowland's brow lightened as if a cloud lowering there had suddenly cleared away—because Master Rowland began to look as if it were a much more agreeable experience to contemplate Mrs. Betty nervous and glum, than Lady Betty armed at a hundred points, and all but invulnerable—Master Rowland walked as alertly to her side as if there were no such things as sprains in this world. “Madam, forgive me if I have attributed to you a weak complacency to which you would never descend. Madam, if you have changed your mind, and can now tolerate my suit, and accord it the slightest return, I am at your feet.”

Assuredly, the tall, vigorous, accomplished squire would have been there, not in a figure but in his imposing person. Family explanations were admissible a century and a half ago; public declarations were sometimes a point of honour—witness the case of Lord Peterborough and Mrs. Anastasia Robinson, whose memory Mrs. Delany's shade now defends from scandal; bodily prostration was by no means exploded; matter-of-fact squires knelt like romantic knights; Sir Charles Grandison and Sir Roger de Coverley bent as low for their own purposes as fantastic gauze and tinsel troubadours.

But Mrs. Betty prevented him. “I am not worth it, Master Rowland,” cried Mrs. Betty, sobbing and covering her face with her hands; and, as she could not have seen the obeisance, the gentleman intermitted it, pulled down the hands, kissed Madam Betty oftener than the one fair salute, and handed her across the room to receive Granny's blessing; and certainly granny sat up and composed herself, and wished them joy (though she had the grace to look a little ashamed of herself), very much as if she had obtained her end.

There is no use in denying that young madam took to bed for three days, and was very pettish for a fortnight; but eventually she gave in to the match as to an unavoidable misfortune, and was not so much afflicted by it as she had expected, after the first brunt. Granny, in her age, was so absurdly set on the mésalliance, and so obliging and pleasant about everything else—the vicar and the little lasses were so provokingly careless of the wrong done them and the injury to the family—that she knew

very well, when her back was turned, they formed as nonsensically hilarious a bridal party as if the wedding had concerned one of themselves and not the bachelor uncle, the squire of Larks' Hall. And Mrs. Betty ordered down the smartest livery ; and the highest gentry in Somersetshire would have consented to grace the ceremony, had she cared for their presence, such a prize was she in their country-houses when they could procure her countenance during their brief sojourn among sparkling rills and woodland shades. Altogether, young madam, in spite of her vanities and humours, loved the children, the vicar, Granny, the bridegroom, and even (with a grudge) the bride, and was affected by the sweet summer season and the happy marriage-tide, and was, in the main, too good to prove a kill-joy.

Master Rowland and Mrs. Betty were married by Master Rowland's own brother in the vicar's own church, with Fiddy and Prissy and the Sedleys for bridesmaids, and Dick Ashbridge for a groom's-man. Cousin Ward, brought all the way from town to represent the bride's relations, was crying as if she were about to lose an only daughter ; none cried like cousin Ward—young madam at the vicarage could not hold the candle to her. For Granny, she would not have shed one bright, crystal tear on any account ; besides, she was over in state at Lark's Hall to welcome home the happy couple. Ah, well, they were all happy couples in those days !

At Larks' Hall, Mrs. Betty bloomed during many a year : for a fine woman knows no decay ; she only passes from one stage of beauty and excellence to another, wearing, as her rightful possession, all hearts—her sons', as their father's before them. And Master Rowland was no longer lonely in his hall, in the frosty winter dusk or under the Usher-oak in the balmy summer twilight, but walked through life briskly and bravely, with a perfect mate ; whom, true himself, he had not failed to recognize as a real diamond among the bits of glass before the footlights—a diamond which his old mother had consented to set for him.

Our squire and Lady Betty are relics of a former generation. We have squires as manly by thousands, as accomplished by tens of thousands ; but the imitable union of simplicity and refinement, downrightness and dignity disappeared with the last faint reflection of Sir Roger de Coverley. And charming Lady Betty departed also with early hours, millions and cosmetics—that blending of nature and art, knowledge of the corrupt world and abiding true-heartedness, which existed, by a marvel, in the one phase of the host.

Schoolmasters.

Who shall assign a date to the first ridicule of the schoolmaster and the tutor? Comic writers have made him one of their favourite butts, and even grave writers have betrayed him. Some have mocked him in his chair of authority, and some, like Pope and Churchill, have shot at him flying. At home with his pupils, or travelling with them, he has never been safe. With his ferule, he has been a monster; without it, an impostor, affecting a home and family tenderness which he cannot be expected to feel in reality. Sidney, Shakspeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Bishop Corbet, and we know not how many more of our early writers who could command the laugh of the town, have all had their fling at him; indeed, of such writers, we may ask, who has ever said a solitary word in his favour? But his discredit is older, far older, than this. Juvenal in Rome laments over the want of appreciation, and the ill-paid services, not of the sham school speculator, but of the really *doctus Palamon*, who might well have shed tears, not as Isocrates did at having to accept a fee, but at having to accept so very small a one. We could copy many an ugly picture. St. Augustine calls the school system of his day “*magna tyrannis et grave malum*;” and the learned Erasmus, in his *Encomium of Folly*, describes the master as “taking a great pride and delight in frowning and looking big upon the trembling urchins; in boxing, slashing, and striking with the ferule:” and this last, near about the day of Grocyn, Linacer, Ascham, and Dean Colet, when, if ever, a short gleam of honour shone upon the profession of the schoolmaster. In vain, on the other hand, have some of our best heads in England striven to come to the rescue, and tried to prove that the profession should be one of honour, and not of obloquy. In no country—not even in France—have the laughers so much of their own way, and for so long a time, as in England. It is one of our longest, if not our final test; and with a view to give it fair opportunity, every public question is put in every possible light, and made to throw itself into every conceivable attitude. It may be almost asserted that nothing whatever has been established in England that has not passed triumphantly through this ordeal, which our national character makes the severest of all. The school and schoolmaster have had their full share. Lord Bacon, in his *Advancement*, vindicates the instruction and the instructors of youth from contempt, and loudly condemns “the disesteeming of those employments wherein youth is conversant, and which are conversant about youth;” and he set his seal to the truth of his words in the letters to Secretary Conway, written many years afterwards, in which he requests for himself the appointment

to the provostship of Eton. Bacon missed it, but the man who held it—Wotton—thought it no disgrace to have changed the duties of a statesman and an ambassador for those of a pedagogue, which he esteems as a high and public office. These are his words at the opening of his *Survey of Education* :—" If any shall think education, because it is conversant about children, to be but a private and domestic duty, he will run some danger, in my opinion, to have been ignorantly bred himself." Not to weary the reader with quotations, which, however, are far less easily met with on this side of the question than on the other, we will only add a line or two from Cowley's *Essay on Liberty* :—" I take the profession of a schoolmaster to be one of the most useful, and which ought to be of the most honourable in a commonwealth." Thus, at least, some great men have shown themselves disposed to pay respect to the office, where those who hold it suffer it to be respectable, and have thought highly of the post, when they have thought of it as *they* would themselves have wished to fill it ; that is to say, they have honoured their own ideal of the tutor and schoolmaster.

And now, again, for the actual. How far has the public feeling towards the pedagogue been undergoing change ? Hundreds of influential writers have given, by their remarks on education, an importance to the office of educators. There has been an immense accumulation of records of gratitude from individual pupils to individual teachers, and respect for the office itself has risen—but how slowly ! Busby, in spite of those magnificent "blooms of his rod," with whom, in full expansion, Dr. Johnson nearly fills one of the volumes of his *Lives of the Poets*, is a name rather smiled at than honoured ; and the schoolmaster-in-chief of our own day, Arnold, is compelled to confess, in one of his private letters, that the educator, as such, holds *no position*, and that it is desirable to attach "the Reverend," as soon as possible, to give a greater prestige, though it may fairly be questioned whether, in the majority of cases, more is not lost by "the Reverend" than gained by the schoolmaster from the junction. There is still such a mingled feeling of dislike to, and suspicion of, the office, that our novelists and satirists, like those of old, can make their play upon those who hold it ; taking unfavourable specimens as fair representatives of the class, and feeling that enough of public feeling is still with them to make their portraits popular. The rich chairs of the higher public schools are, indeed, sought for by men of mark, as being among the most likely prefaces to a bishopric, but even these not by men of family ;—indeed, men who are, or fancy themselves, of anything like high caste, without means in proportion, would, for the most part, rather beg, borrow, or live in the narrowest way, than lose that caste by earning money in any office of education. This is the simple fact, however painful it may be to state it. You might cite to them great men, from Dionysius to Louis Philippe downwards, who have been engaged in instruction ; or tell them, in the words of Adam Smith, that legions of the worthies of Greece thus employed themselves. You

will not get men of high family to fancy that a schoolmaster's office is anything but a subordinate one. Search the rolls even of college tutors, private and public, and you will find, almost without exception, that they are men strictly of the middle, occasionally of the lower class. One main reason for this unquestionably is, that men of real or supposed high social rank, though they would submit to vegetate upon two or three hundred a year in a Government office, responsible to two or three official superiors, would detest the idea of being in any way minutely accountable, as the instructor must be directly, to every parent who chooses to intrust him with his son, whether patrician or plebeian; still more unpalatable is the idea of an income made up by private and often plebeian payments; for, to the Government official, the numerous private payments which supply his salary are purified by being filtered through the public purse. There is a certain sense of favour, private patronage, and obligation in the schoolmaster's position, if we except the very highest, from which even the merchant in his transactions is comparatively free, or, at least, feels himself so; or the professional man, who receives his fee for some distinct single exercise of his craft; the *quid pro quo* is more measurable and distinct in the exchange of goods for money, and money for goods, than where the moral is paid for by the material, the uncertain by the certain, and where not one parent in twenty feels quite sure that he has got his money's worth for his money. However well the schoolmaster may feel that he has earned and overearned the payment, his consciousness of the parent's uncertainty often acts disagreeably on his own mind, and, indeed, is one of the almost inevitable pains of his position. Then again, whatever Bacon, Wotton, and the rest may have said, men, and especially proud men, desire to mix with and to struggle with their coëvals, and dislike the idea of perpetual engagement with the immature—a feeling at which no one can wonder: and thus it is that, though education is a topic popular and fashionable, in which some of our social and political leaders really feel, and all affect, interest—on which our statesmen, from the Premier downwards, give amateur lectures all over the country during parliamentary recesses—yet, however great the appetite for talking about education, its duties, and responsibilities, its practice is about the very last employment to which most of the lecturers would resort. It is much the same with the man of letters: he likes to view his scholarship as a grace, not as a stock-in-trade; and if he is ever a schoolmaster, it is generally his necessities that make him so; school labours interfere with his insatiable yearning for endless self-instruction. He often scatters throughout his works invaluable hints on the disposition of youth, on its capacities, its tempers, its training. Scarcely an English moralist can be mentioned who has not done so,—hints, many of them never picked up by the drudging but often unreading schoolmasters for whose guidance they were intended; and abroad, look at La Bruyère, Rousseau, De Staël, Jean Paul, Lamartine, Soubestre, and a host of others, by whose golden sentences on youth and its discipline the majority even of our upper teachers

seem never to have been made one whit the wiser ; for it is only here and there a man, who, after the toils of the day over print and paper, has energy to labour on, on his own account, or courage to withdraw from his fireside enjoyments for any purpose of private study. And here it may be observed that, as a high appreciation of the advance of other minds can scarcely be conceived to exist without an intense desire of the improvement of one's own, so every schoolmaster of a really high order makes a sacrifice, for which it is impossible to make a compensation approaching to adequacy. Even the pleasure of seeing his pupils advance, one by one, far on paths of honour, is not always without a certain sadness, such as one may be expected to feel who is ever giving passports to a land of promise and beauty, into which he himself is never destined to enter.

Another reason of prejudice against the schoolmaster and his office, not much in itself, because often shared by him with the members of some other professions, but considerable when added to the sum of objections, is, that he is generally poor—without capital, except his education ; or with a very small capital. We know upon how many minds in England this is likely to tell, and there is no denying the fact or averting its consequences upon the vulgar estimate of the schoolmaster's profession. We simply state this, not wishing to diverge into a vain protest against mammon worship, but because as is the estimation of a schoolmaster, so will often be the average schoolmaster himself; the quality of an article in these cases often actually tending to sink to the value at which it is rated, whether the estimation is originally a fair or an unfair one.

The tendency of public feeling, then, as we have endeavoured to show, and we believe without exaggeration, is, however much in favour of education, rather against the individual educator, tending to keep him down ; and on him lies the onus of raising himself, and, with himself, as far as possible, the estimate of his profession. Most of the sources of prejudice to which reference has been as yet made, are, it must be owned, almost necessities of his position. His main payments, especially where teaching is connected with boarding, coming from private hands ; his subjection to innumerable petty interferences and remonstrances ; and the general consciousness that he is so subject ; his amenability to private criticism rather than to large public judgment as to his efficiency ; his general want of large means ; the main business of his life concerned with children and boys, not with men, and strongly leading him to trace the same eternal and limited circle, often real, always imagined ; the confining nature of his labours, generally keeping him in great measure secluded from the world of men, and from a liberalizing mixture with general society,—and, on the other hand, if he does so mix, the ready inference that his duties are neglected ; nay, his very efforts to give dignity to his position, and shake off some of what are deemed its humiliations, sometimes leading him too far in the other direction, and tending to what is by no means uncommon in many schoolmasters, a blunt want of

courtesy, and an unnecessary giving of offence, and an absolute unreasonableness, in order to shake off every semblance of servility;—all these, we say, are disadvantages against which it requires a very superior mind, indeed, and a constant and consummate exercise of practical judgment, to buoy up this profession; indeed, they are difficulties and disadvantages which will probably permanently hinder it from ranking amongst the professions *par excellence*. We speak not so much here of young men who commence life as educators, and who are respected for the credit of another future which they often have in prospect, as of the doomed and devoted instructor for life, and who must, out of his profession, get his respectability, or in spite of it.

Most of the difficulties above mentioned are the "inseparable accidents" of the profession as exercised by most private, and even by some public schoolmasters and tutors. There are others which we are obliged to state, or we should not be taking a thorough view of our subject. There is a kind of admitted claim, that one who sets up as a teacher and guide should himself approach to something like perfection of character, though probably no one who presents this bill seriously expects to find it honoured to the full. Then there is a shrewd and very general suspicion that the profession is a makeshift, as truly it often is; indeed, to those who dislike it, and they are the majority, the occupation seems so eminently repugnant that they have the greatest difficulty in conceiving that any one can possibly have a sincere taste for it; they would scarcely credit such a passion as that professed by a clever French baronne, to us carrying conviction in the very terms of its expression: "J'avais dès mon enfance un goût dominant d'instruire et documenter quelqu'un." If we honour, above all, a man whose heart is in his profession, people are not likely to be much disposed to honour a profession into which they fancy that not one out of twenty of its professors can possibly throw his heart. These are further reasons for popular prejudice more or less just.

Then there are perils of character to which the instructor of the young is greatly exposed, and is known to be so, as he is too often giving proof of it. Notwithstanding his vague and occasional responsibility to parents, most of his daily life is spent in having his own way, and so every fault of his disposition is in danger of running to excess, whether it be penuriousness, impatience, irritability, favouritism, indolence, unreasonableness—faults all of which would be exposed to smart checks if his intercourse lay with men. This liability, however, is not like some of the others. We have mentioned an inevitable disadvantage, which demands a constant vigilance for its counteraction, and only a naturally noble heart and originally happy temper rises unscathed ever from the perpetual ordeal, a man's very superiority so often making him impatient of imperfection, and his mental excellence constituting his moral trial.

Besides the real drawbacks and difficulties which are the cause of his disesteem, and the deserved censure which he often incurs, the schoolmaster is subject to certain unreasonable demands, and if he fails to satisfy

them, to consequently unreasonable charges. From one of the most frequently urged of these, supposing him in other respects to be a "good man," we here mean to defend him, and check, if possible, those who seek to bring him into discredit on false grounds. One of the commonest accusations against the schoolmaster in the present day, especially if there is no other fault to find with him, is either that he has not got the tact, or will not consider it to be his duty, to consult the peculiarities of his individual pupils, and adapt his treatment and tuition separately to each character. Where a man has five or six pupils, or even ten or a dozen, the demand may be made reasonably enough; but we have heard one of the very foremost men of the present day bring the charge against the masters of the public school at which he was educated, that they did not spy out, cultivate, and give him credit for the talent which has since made him world-famous, though at fifteen or sixteen years of age he bade the said school farewell. The French novelist, Mürger, taking probably pretty much the same view of a master's obligations, speaks with all the bitterness of personal feeling and with considerable coarseness of the "*méthode unique d'enseignement brutal*" pursued at some schools.

Sir Joshua Reynolds' father, we are told, wrote indignantly under one of the great painter's early sketches, made at an improper time, "Done by Joshua, out of pure idleness :" who shall blame the father for not foreseeing a grand, but what was then a problematical, career ? A schoolmaster may, perhaps, have more secret sympathy with a lad who is fond of spouting scraps of Shakspeare than with one who says his Horace perfectly. The boy may possibly be a Garrick in embryo ; but if the master were to make provision for any such development, the chances are that in the end he would find himself mistaken. The boy who can amuse his schoolfellows, and, perhaps, his teacher, with an ingenious story, may possibly be an unfledged Walter Scott ; but the chances are that he is nothing of the kind. A sensible master knows this, and that his only proper course is to give his preference, if he gives a preference at all, to a boy who will show his spirit, talent, perseverance, and ambition, by running fairly and straightforwardly in the same path with his fellows, and fairly beating them in it. Probably the greatest man was never much the worse for anything he was compelled to learn in a really good school, whether he liked it or not. The teacher has sometimes very little opportunity for observing peculiarities of genius, especially if they lie out of the common track ; often no time, consistently with his duty, for consulting its caprices ; often not that manysidedness in himself which could appreciate the specialties which may happen to exist in fifty or a hundred pupils. To bring out the good common working qualities, and those most likely to be useful in the common professions and usual walks of life, is the master's duty and plain wisdom, and the regularity of a system, common as far as possible to all, is the best discipline for a boy. The real fault is, where a master takes the other plan, and pays special attention to pet boys, giving them more than a just share of his time ;

for this, too, he will find plenty to blame him, and with very good reason. To some masters, indeed—especially the crotchety and dishonest—this is an overpowering temptation, particularly in schools of unwieldy size; and we may have again occasion to refer to it.

One of our objects in this paper is to give such hints as may tend to raise the character of the instructor, and with it the repute of his profession; and we proceed, without making more than a passing allusion to the crime of gross cruelty, or that meanness of making money by petty profits and unnecessary extras, of which some masters of a low order are guilty, and of which many more are suspected—the latter of which practices has probably done more to degrade the profession in the eyes of the world than any other single cause that could be alleged; so we have felt bound to give it a passing word. The low, savage, or sordid schoolmaster is beneath our counsel, and would probably scarcely comprehend it—that whole class will be eliminated sooner than cured, and is, indeed, already plainly diminishing, and few middle-class parents are now careless enough to countenance or trust him. The advice here offered shall be worthy of worthier men.

Separating from the schoolmaster his occasionally clerical character, what means has he, then, of raising himself in public esteem? We see only two—his learning, and his tone of feeling and manners. These appertain to him, lie naturally in his path, and in these directions, if in any, society expects to find his excellence, notwithstanding his peculiar difficulties; theoretically, indeed, a perfection in self-culture and self-discipline may be demanded in one who assumes the culture and discipline of others as his life's office.

And first for "learning." In any high sense of the term it is rare in schoolmasters: many never seek it, but are content with their old school and college stock; and many who do, feel that they have no extra time, nor courage, nor energy to make or find time, and so the accomplished college scholar is too often ever tending to a skilful drudge in special subjects. But this is not all the learning wanted. It is not enough for a man to set his own "*au fait*" against his pupil's incipient awkwardness, his own rapid against his scholar's slow solution of problems, his own thorough knowledge of the prescribed "school book" against his pupil's gradual acquisition of its contents. Boys soon see through this sort of thing now-a-days, and cease to respect it. They quickly discover the difference between a schoolmaster who has ideas, and one who only skilfully

"can temper

His longs and shorts with que and semper;"

and they view the latter as a great clever schoolboy of whose capacities they have the measure. In order thoroughly to respect a master, boys must feel that he dwells in an altogether higher region of knowledge, as Arnold did, and that he occasionally throws to them handfuls of wealth from unknown treasures; and further than this, the master should know

that a sham, pompous, and superficial display is almost sure to be found out by an intelligent form. We have said that schoolmasters are not generally in the highest sense a learned class. Let us take one branch only, that of English classical literature, and bring, not the respectable private schoolmaster of a country town, but some of our "high men," to the test. They have, every now and then, a demand made upon their knowledge, when speeches are selected for public days. Can anything be much more miserable than the result? With the whole wealth of England's literature often in their libraries, they seem incapable of varying their programme; we have the same eternal round of well-known bits, varied, if at all, by some piece in vogue from the gilt volume of a poet in fashion, lying on the drawing-room table. Will any one venture to affirm that this is not the case?

Supposing a man has taste and power for anything like wide and general study, how is he to find the time? We answer it is certain that some few men do find it, and make a good use of it. We may fairly suppose a master generally to be sufficiently independent to be in some measure the regulator of the time which he conscientiously gives to the work of actual instruction. The private schoolmaster is, at any rate, his own law in this matter, and the public one is not, as a general rule, by any means overtaxed. If parents wish to seize upon his every available moment, and to force him to be an untiring drudge, and nothing else, he ought to know that his real influence with his scholars depends upon his being something more, and to resist all such short-sighted, selfish, and inconsiderate demands. Out of nine hours a day, a man will be doing more ultimate good to himself and his pupils by giving to his own cultivation two or three of the hours, than by sacrificing the whole nine to positive teaching, especially to teaching, what is now a common demand, little more than the elements of who shall say how many multifarious subjects.

A man's general superiority soon gets wind beyond the walls of his schoolroom; his pupils remember and respect it in after life, and will often appeal to his taste or his judgment when they have a difficulty—an honour which they would never think of paying to the mere ordinary, apt schoolmaster. If thoroughly cultivated schoolmasters were common, we should soon see the profession rising in esteem; and we have only here to add, that what militates greatly against this perpetual self-culture of the instructor, is his self-satisfaction at his perpetual triumphs over subordinate wills and immature intellects—a self-satisfaction only scorned, on such grounds, by superior men.

The next matter well worth a man's thought and care, if he wishes to conciliate true respect, is the tone of feeling to be cultivated in his boys, and, therefore, primarily in himself; and the manners, by which we do not mean merely the "nice conduct" of a silver fork, or those "modes of genteel society," as it is called, which a clever monkey might soon be instructed to imitate. Indeed, the day is pretty nearly, though not quite,

over, when, if a man known to be a schoolmaster is announced, people look for the entrance of something peculiarly angular and dogmatic, and are rather surprised than otherwise, if they find him to be, on the whole, upon trial, rather a pleasant and unaffected gentleman. Ordinary and external good manners we may suppose he possesses, but what we aspire to for him is something more. Certainly, a boy, ambitious as the English are above all things of the character and bearing of gentlemen, ought not to feel that he goes to school for knowledge, but returns home for manners and civilization. The schoolmaster ought to be the equal, and, if he can possibly make himself so, the superior of the parent in this latter point also. In "fashion," he may not be; but he ought to show to his pupils, by his own example, that feeling is higher than mode, as the gold is higher than the graving or setting, and that fashion, without feeling or with low feeling, is but base coin, whosever head or stamp it bears; and we may be pardoned for saying, that it is just in this direction that a schoolmaster has, in England, a fair and wide scope, especially if he have himself a naturally good and generous disposition; and herein, he should be dominated over by no sectional prejudices, and submit to no class dictation: he should aim at giving that general moral greatness, which, if anything, can cover the differences of cliques, shades, and grades, penetrate into the depths of character, and give a nobility of sentiment, by no means necessarily the fruit of a long course in the schools of the aristocracy.

Out of a dozen schoolmasters, skilful in teaching as an art, of fairly cultivated manners, of blameless industry in inculcating the dogmas of our religion, teaching science and language with tact and zeal, do we find one who cultivates with equal care the higher and more ennobling qualities of the heart—extensive sympathy, wide comprehension, largeness, grandeur, and generosity of moral views; a schoolmaster, in fine, to whom his pupils naturally revert in after life as their highest moral type, model, and example? There is no foot-rule to measure these; there is no seeing them; they are above all statute payment; they are not "branches," but *con amore* gifts out of the fulness of a man's heart to those who come within his influence; glorious prejudices which have a tendency to spread and infect the young like a passion. For youth has a wonderful sympathy with what is strongly felt. We have no room to enter into the various effects of a high tone of feeling thus inspiring a school. Let us take a single school curse which it would tend to mitigate—that proud, painful, ungenerous questioning about parentage, which has been the torture of many a boy of high feeling but humble origin at our English schools—one out of a hundred modes of displaying meanness and narrowness of heart.

Had we more men of this moral elevation in our schools from the highest to the lowest, who shall say that it would not tend infinitely to increase the respect felt for the profession at large? Every man we know has his own modes of influence, and a man of drier character would fail if he aped the enthusiasm of an Arnold; but each, in his

way, should aim more than our masters now do at the education of sentiment.

It was remarked at the commencement; that the standard of the schoolmaster, and with it, naturally, his estimation, has been already raised. This is owing far less to vague talk and interest in society respecting education than to two or three positive movements. The first of these movements in the case of the middle classes was the institution of the proprietary school, by which a large portion of the education of the country was thrown into the hands of men themselves liberally educated, appointed according to the value of testimonials generally of a highly respectable character. The gentry of many neighbourhoods were tired of being imposed upon by school speculators of whose attainments they had no guarantee; many of these parents, too, may have smarted at the recollection of having in their youth been intrusted to impostors, and were so determined to secure something better for their children. The idea might almost seem to have been taken from the younger Pliny, who, in one of his letters, speaks of a search made by the Roman patricians in his neighbourhood for some good schoolmaster whom they might establish in common for the instruction of their boys. The offer of a liberal salary brought, of course, many competitors, and good men were generally chosen. Some of these schools have thoroughly succeeded; some have swelled into colleges. In nearly all there have been occasional disputes—in some, ruinous ones—between the gentlemen proprietors and the masters who would not submit to interference and dictation. Still, unquestionably, the movement, on the whole, has been a most advantageous one, and many a man, mercantile or professional, now in middle life, owes to it an education ten times better than his father had a chance of receiving.

The next practical movement in advance has been the establishment of the "middle-class" and "competitive examinations." We can say of the former with certainty, as to one, at least, of their original suggestors, that they were got up in no mere *dilettante* or fidgety spirit, but from a felt necessity, and with a full consciousness that many difficulties might occur in the execution of the plan. University examiners were worried, and the extent of school impostures shown, by the miserable specimens presenting themselves for examination, of whom, even at the first examination, two out of eight, on a daily average, were plucked at Oxford, at least, and two more were often fairly pluckable. Nearly fresh from school as they were, nothing could account for this but permitted idleness or villainously bad instruction. Besides these, there was a numerous class to be accounted for of well-disposed young men, who, feeling themselves too weakly prepared for fair rivalry, dawdled through college in some unaccountable way, equally without dissipation and without distinction. Now, when men were impudently sent to college in this state by schoolmasters who would be ready, if challenged, to lay the whole blame on university idleness, it was fairly argued that boys must be still more

miserably neglected who were destined to be turned out into life without any public trial at all. It was for the protection of parents, then, that these trials were suggested, with certain conditions, more or less perfectly carried out, for the further protection of the schoolmaster as well, such as the following:—That no boy should be exposed to any middle-class examination under the age of fifteen; that the examination should be one without respect to special grammars or formulæ; that no master should be in any way responsible for a boy who had been under his care for less than three years; and that a boy should only be examined on subjects in which his master had professedly prepared him; that the names, not of the boys necessarily, but of the schools, should be published in cases of disgraceful failure—the tendency of this last being to force a master, in self-defence, to refuse to have his discipline tampered with by the indulgence of parents, to put a stop to extra irregular holidays, and the unreasonable demand of a vast number of multifarious subjects; and last, not least, to prevent masters from putting forth their whole strength on certain showcards and pattern-boys, to the utter neglect of the less promising—a system common in large schools in England, and complained of by Jules Janin in France, who says of his own master that, after inspecting him and trying his paces, he put him on a kind of bench of outcasts, to be more or less neglected—“*comme nullement digne de ses projets ni de ses leçons*”—a process which takes place, practically, at many an overgrown school of high name among ourselves. Defects there may be in the working of these examinations, but there can be no doubt that they will tend to act as checks on a vast amount of folly in parents, and want of conscientiousness in masters: the credit and subsistence of the masters will be publicly at stake, and they will not be inclined to sacrifice these to satisfy the whims of parents, who wish to combine improvement with indulgence, and to get education without discipline. This movement will, in a measure, tend to raise the schoolmaster's quality, and with it his estimation.

Then there are the “competitive examinations,” at which we can only give a brief glance. In spite of some of the possible mischiefs to which the *Quarterly* alludes, we are far more inclined to take the general view of *The Times* on this matter, and to approve them in the main and in the principle, whatever occasional faults, excesses, and absurdities may occur in carrying them out.

A postman's examination may be a vast deal too high and irrelevant; and to some of the papers of examination for the far loftier Indian appointments, we should feel very much inclined to prefix a sentence of Locke's *Essay*: “Nobody ought to be expected to know everything;” but “*les réformes se relâchent toujours*,” and this kind of evil will probably cure itself.

There is a kind of sham grandeur and nobility of view of which one of the favourite butts is real or supposed pedantry, and a trick in some writers of making play on a national characteristic of which the English

are perhaps somewhat foolishly proud, namely, a disposition to chance many things which really admit of some degree of exactness. As part and parcel of this, there is a love of reference to all that England has done by sheer strength, and after immense and useless cost, to make up for wholly unnecessary blunders; a delight in reference also to great men, whom their genius has made equal to occasions for which their education had not prepared them—instances on which all ill-prepared men, their patrons and supporters, find it amazingly convenient to fall back.

Self-interest is never more contemptible and ridiculous than when it assumes the heroical and the “large;” and in the army and elsewhere, the attack on that description of patronage which shows its “affection and gratitude” by helping unfit persons to appointments paid for out of the public purse might expect to meet with strong resistance.

When a great man happens to get into his right place, no doubt he carries everything before him; and it is happy for the public when it gets the tide or stream of individual genius to serve its purposes: but it is, after all, to minds of the canal order that it must trust a great deal of its heavy work—civil or military, political or social, high or low. Laboriously and methodically formed, mechanically filled, with no violent current in any one direction, always to be depended upon, making straight for their terminus, of sufficient uniform depth, without sullen, sleepy pools, or flashing cataracts, or capricious and confusing eddies, without glory, without beauty, they are useful public servants in the main, and genius is at least as likely to be indolent, precipitate, conceited, or refractory as acquired aptness—and as dishonest. The field of high political life is itself the place of test and trial, and the public are the judges; but for all offices, except the very highest, we cordially approve the principle of reasonable competition. The hearing given to this question, and the trial made of it, however injudicious in some of its details, is a great conquest gained by common sense and public opinion—one of the most important, indeed, of our day and generation; and we trust that the development of the body by physical training—now so much in vogue—will counteract any too great tendency to overstrain the mind at the expense of its partner.

We have had plenty of evidence that no subject has a greater tendency to “branch out into infinity” than that of education, and we have put severe restraint upon ourselves to prevent our essay from rambling into many tempting bypaths.

The English Convict System.

THE survey of the Convict System in Ireland naturally suggested the survey of the system in England, but I was called upon to make that second inspection in a very peremptory manner. Days before the month of March was out, the report on the Irish system in the April number of the *Cornhill Magazine* attracted the attention of the English Convict Department. But it was not until the 15th of April that a letter appeared in *The Times*, complaining that I had overstated the proportion of relapses into crime amongst the ticket-of-leave men. On looking at the subject again, I found that unquestionably I had been misled. I was now told that amongst the number who were re-committed in the two years 1857 and 1858, were many who had been discharged under an obsolete system, many who had been acquitted on trial, others who had had their licences revoked for offences only of a trifling kind. As "the writer of the article in the *Cornhill Magazine*," I addressed to *The Times* a reply admitting the inaccuracy, but observing that I should not have been so misled if the explanation now given had been embodied in the return; and I also pointed out that there was an error even in the present explanation, since I was invited to compare the relapses for two years with the discharges for four years and a quarter. The writer of the letter to *The Times* was Sir Joshua Jebb, the head of the English Department, who parenthetically remarked that I had "most grossly and, he feared, wilfully misrepresented" the return to the House of Lords. In my reply, I said that Sir Joshua had exaggerated, though I was sure not wilfully, the bearing of his own explanation; but I forbore to press some further proofs—such, for instance, as the fact that the total number of convicts discharged, with which he would have compared the relapses, must be diminished by allowing for the expiration of licences. Remarking that I had not the slightest personal interest in the Irish Convict System, I offered, if the same facility were afforded me here as in Ireland, to bestow all pains in making a report upon the English system as complete as that which had been challenged. Sir Joshua Jebb rejoined in the handsomest terms by withdrawing his charge, asking me to "overlook" it, and inviting me to arrange some plan for visiting the English prisons. I called at the office of the Department in Parliament Street, and I have since visited the prisons at Millbank, Pentonville, Portland, Chatham, Portsmouth, Parkhurst, Brixton, and Fulham. To the Metropolitan prisons I was accompanied by Sir Joshua himself, or by Captain O'Brien; at Portsmouth, I met Captain Gambier, the second Director; and at all, the orders of Sir Joshua Jebb procured me every facility. If I had been a Government commissioner I could not have had the way thrown more completely open to me;

and I have to acknowledge a courtesy, a zeal, and a personal kindness in the gentlemen who received me, which no official character could have exacted. In the course of my survey, I was told more than once that no other Englishman had made the same round with the same scrutiny, and I believe, indeed, that the only person who preceded me in a similar survey, upon which he was able to bestow more time, was M. Bérenger, the President of the Court of Cassation, in Paris, and author of an important work on *La Répression Pénale, de ses Formes et de ses Effets*. Wherever I went I saw numbers of men pursuing their stated tasks with order and diligence; I saw fine buildings, matchless cleanliness, admirable contrivances for securing propriety and health in all directions; I saw the traces of considerable improvement, and I did not visit a part that was not full of instruction.

The English convict system has grown out of previous systems, partly through the natural progress of improvement, partly through the force of external pressure, and partly through the ability of its leading administrators. Its present magnitude may be said to result from the numbers of the English population, the proportion of crime in that population, and, in a secondary degree, from the compulsory ending of colonial transportation. Our readers will remember that for the grave offences not visited with capital punishment, transportation was the penalty—to "Botany Bay," as it was called years back; Australia being at first mainly colonized with criminals. The enormous proportion of a criminally trained and bred population in our Australian colonies was brought to an end in a most curious manner. A few individuals who approached it in a philosophic spirit saw the atrocious tendency of this growing evil, and forced Parliament to look at it; and Sir William Molesworth's committee of 1837, which presented a masterly report drawn up by Sir William, was the means for closing that chapter in our criminal history. I will not trace the history of the abandonment to its close,—the reluctance of New South Wales to lose the supply of white slave labour, and the threat to rebel when it was to be sent back again; the desire of Van Diemen's Land to retain it, and then the revulsion which made that colony repudiate the abomination; Lord Grey's attempt to distribute a little convictism to all our colonies, beginning with the Cape of Good Hope, and the actual revolt of the Cape people until the *Neptune* left their shores with its hateful cargo; the assent of Western Australia to receive the Government emigrants; and, finally, the avowed opinion even of that backward settlement that it must not have too much convictism thrown into it. Suffice it to say that by no slow degrees there had been an increasing pressure upon our means of accommodation at home. Principles for the guidance of the Convict Department were laid down by Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham in 1842, and they are now clearly to be recognized as the principles which guide the department in 1861. In the meanwhile, too, in 1847, a memorandum was presented to the Home Office, declaring that "those whitened sepulchres," the hulks, must be given up.

This memorandum was signed by a person who forms in himself an important element of our convict system. In 1837 an Act was passed which provided that "all plans of prisons should be submitted for the approval of the Secretary of State." Lord John Russell was then Secretary of State, and he applied to the Master General of the Ordnance for the assistance of an officer of the Royal Engineers, to whom he could refer for advice. The Master General happened to know "exactly the man"—Captain Jebb, the son of an officer in the Army, and himself an officer in the Royal Engineers, distinguished for his mastery in military engineering, and for his ability in imparting his information, technically as well as popularly. Captain Jebb presented a report on the construction of a model prison, with plans. That report has been translated into the French and German languages. Every prison in this country has subsequently been erected on the principle of the model, and a large prison in Paris has followed the same example, which has also been used in Prussia and other parts of the Continent. The first practical result of this plan was the Model Prison at Pentonville, erected by Captain Jebb. It is built somewhat after the main idea of Bentham's Panopticon; for it may be said to consist of four wings, which radiate from the centre, so that at a point near the main entrance you can literally see the whole prison. Captain Jebb was officially appointed Surveyor-General of the Prisons, and all plans of prisons, of station-houses for police, and similar structures, were subjected to his revision. In 1840 Captain Jebb was associated with Lord Yarborough, the present Lord Eversley, and afterwards Sir James P. Kay Shuttleworth, in the management of Parkhurst Prison. Meanwhile our convict system had continued to grow, and it became necessary to place the prison at Pentonville under more systematic control. A commission for that purpose was appointed in 1842; amongst the commissioners were the Lord President of the Council, the Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Chichester, and Colonel Jebb. Six years later, in 1848, an entirely new system of convict management was constructed and carried out. Portland Prison was built in a situation where the labour of the convict could be employed on public works; it was followed up by others at Portsmouth and Chatham; while prisons were constructed at Dartmouth and Woking for invalids. The whole was placed under the management of three Directors, and Colonel Jebb was made the Chairman of the Directorate. Though he had sacrificed the pecuniary advantages of his prospects in the Engineers, Captain Jebb has advanced by regular steps to the rank of Major-General, and his public services have been rewarded by making him a Knight Commander of the Bath. I have by no means endeavoured to trace out Sir Joshua Jebb's personal history, or I might mention other services which he has rendered. For instance, in 1844 he was on Lord Cathcart's commission for investigating the system of punishments in the Army. It is more germane to my purpose that he was afterwards appointed by the Secretary at War to organize the system of Military Prisons, of which he is the Inspector-General, and which I believe are

soon to witness a very important improvement in their more complete severance from the civil prisons.

The entire convict system of England is now governed principally by two Acts of Parliament, passed in 1853 and 1857. The Act of 1853 substituted "penal servitude" for transportation, but subsequently it was found to be seriously defective. Although powers were taken under it to grant a certain remission of sentence by leave to be at large, it was considered that, as the term of a sentence to penal servitude had usually been a commutation of that of transportation—four years representing seven, and so on—the Act did not contemplate remission as a general rule. So disagreeable a change of prospects at once gave a shock to the feelings of the convicts, of whom 6,370 were then on the hands of Government, and their discipline suffered accordingly. The report of Sir Joshua Jebb for 1858, tells us that they were in a "very unsatisfactory state of mind, heedless of consequences, and giving only sullen and dogged obedience." In 1857 this Act was amended by another, newly fixing the periods for which the sentence of penal servitude might be passed, with a new proportion of the period to be remitted as a reward for good conduct. The period of sentence was to range from three years to fifteen years and more. In the case of the shortest sentence, one-sixth might be remitted; in the case of a four years' sentence, one fifth; of a six years' sentence, one fourth; and of a fifteen years' sentence, one third. Practically, this enforced longer periods of imprisonment, and a system was devised at once for the purpose of securing discipline under the difficulties of this home detention by holding out inducements to good conduct, for dealing with refractory convicts, and for providing the prisoners with employment on discharge. The prison at Pentonville had already been constructed, and it was followed by those of Portland, Chatham, and Portsmouth.

The English Convict System now comprises twelve prisons—or, it might be said, thirteen—since Millbank has two compartments, for male and female prisoners. The list, then, would stand thus:—

Separate Confinement.—Millbank, Pentonville, Wakefield, and Leicester, containing in all accommodation for 1,685 prisoners.

Public Works.—Chatham, Portsmouth, Portland, with accommodation for 3,640 prisoners.

Invalids.—Woking, Dartmoor, 1,665 prisoners.

Juvenile Male Prisoners.—Parkhurst, 300.

Females.—Millbank, Brixton, Fulham, 1,371.

In the English system there are three periods of probation:—
1. Separate confinement. 2. Associated labour, or penal servitude in proportion to the sentence. 3. Ticket-of-leave in the colonies or at home—Western Australia being now the only colony available.

The prisoner who is convicted of a crime which subjects him to penal servitude is in the first instance sent either to Wakefield or Leicester, or to the Metropolitan prison at Millbank, which will hold 600 male

prisoners. The building is the old Panopticon of Jeremy Bentham, somewhat modified; but still situated at an unhealthy spot on a flat bank of the Thames. The cells are not very cheerful; and the construction of the building for the purposes of inspection is not very convenient, though it was an immense improvement on the prisons which had existed before the time of its construction. The prisoner is at once put into a separate cell, and provided with labour. If he is a man of any adaptability, he may be set to weaving at the hand-loom; if he is not so capable, he may be turned to tailoring or shoemaking; or if he is a man without any faculty for learning a trade, he is consigned to the exceedingly low occupation of mat-making, which any creature slightly above a quadruped can manage. If the prisoner commit any offence, the case is examined, and he is confined to refractory cells—strongly constructed places, in one or two instances padded for those who are insane, or affect to be so.

From Millbank the male prisoners are drafted to Pentonville, where they are again placed in separate cells and treated individually. There have been many changes in the prison since it was first established. In accordance with an old idea it was suggested that, to spare his being recognized by comrades hereafter, and to promote a salutary shame, the man should wear a mask—a cloth scull-cap, with a peak coming down over the face, having eyelet holes, which remind you of the Brothers of Mercy on the Continent. The trespasser was made to feel *ab extra* the moral influence of being literally “put out of countenance.” But it was found that the men did recognize each other, most easily, and that no moral regeneration could be traced to the cloth; so it was thrown aside. At first the chapel was so constructed that each prisoner was in a separate cell, invisible to his comrades though seen by the chaplain. This was found to be a total blunder. It begot listlessness, irreverence, and worse; and that device, too, has been swept away—was swept away while Henry Mayhew was telling us about it in his *London Labour and the London Poor*; not the only good work done by that writer. I hear from the chaplains that the change from the dreary boxes to the open and, in many prisons, really handsome chapel, has manifestly worked well upon the minds of the prisoners. And the boxes actually facilitated escape; as in the case of a man named Hackett. He slipped down a ventilating shaft; cut his way, with a piece of iron that he had secreted, through a small board in the wall at the bottom of the shaft; walked along a narrow ornamental cornice, over the wall, and over the Governor's house to the ground. At first the period of detention was longer, as this prison was simply the portal to a ticket of leave in the colony or to liberty at home. It has now become the portal to public works. All prisoners who come to the Metropolis pass through it, and the period of detention was reduced, first to twelve months, and then to nine months.

At first a number of trades were taught, but ultimately the occupations were reduced to tailoring and shoemaking for those who had previously been artisans; handloom-weaving for the manufacture of woollen

cloth and coarse shirting; and the mat-making, which I have already mentioned, ranging from very handsome fancy-work to the coarsest kind of door-mat—a sort of rope rasp for scratching the mud off the boots. The two prisons of Millbank and Pentonville are indeed the manufactories for weaving the cloth, making the shoes, and getting up the clothes required for all the Convict Prisons, including the articles of wear given to the prisoners when they leave confinement. At Pentonville in 1857, the prisoners wove 68,747 yards of cloth, more than 11,500 yards of linen and calico stuffs for shirting, towelling, handkerchiefs, &c., besides serge and linsey-woolsey for the female prisoners. They made nearly 7,500 pairs of boots and shoes, and more than 25,000 jackets, trousers, and waistcoats. In one year, more than 75,000 yards of cloth were woven in Pentonville. And although not much, if any, cheaper in price, the prison-made articles are better in material and wear. While Pentonville weaves, Brixton makes up prisoners' linen, and washes for Pentonville and Millbank.

From the top of the tower which surmounts the nucleus of the building, you see the plan of the whole. Beneath you are the four rays, two of them the diameter and base of a semicircle, the other two radiating within the semicircle. In the three spaces between the four walls are circular enclosures, with a small edifice in the midst. These yards are divided by twenty radiating walls, forming so many separate long pointed walks, one side partially covered by a small roofing, the rest being open to the sky. In the central lodge is placed a warder, who paces round and round, eyeing the prisoners through a round hole; and in each yard paces a prisoner who, if he stand still, is warned in a solemn tone to "walk about." The prisoners are "taking exercise." In front of the two foremost wings is a pair of larger yards, perfectly open, without divisions, having concentric elliptical lines of pavement, on which are prisoners moving round and round, at eight paces apart, with a warder watching to see that they do not loiter or hurry on, to snatch a moment's conversation. The enclosed yards are used for refractory, unsound, or crotchety prisoners, the open yards for the remainder; but it is also very much a question of room. Nothing can be imagined more monotonous than this endless march, except, perhaps, the penal servitude of the unfortunate warders.

From the tower we descend to the space below within the building, whence you view at once the entire range of all the radiating wings. Each wing is open to the roof, which is arched and lighted with skylights. On either side are three stories of cells, with gallery footways running the whole length. Light winding staircases lead from the ground floor to the topmost story. The aspect of the whole is pleasant, and even architecturally beautiful. The cells are made of corrugated iron; there is just room for the hammock to be slung, for the essential furniture of a sleeping and dwelling-place, and for the prisoner to turn round in. There is a bell which the prisoner can pull, and in his pulling it a spring throws out a moveable projecting label, which exhibits the number of his cell, and

directs the warden to it. The bedding is good, the whole building is warm, and every corner is most thoroughly ventilated. The man must be a sybarite, indeed, who would feel the smallest discomfort at the idea of sleeping in any of the cells outside the small refractory ward.

The diet is simple but sufficient. At breakfast the man has three-quarters of an ounce of flaked cocoa, or cocoa-nibs, made, with two ounces of milk and six drachms of molasses, into three-quarters of a pint of liquid cocoa. At dinner he has four ounces of meat, weighed when cooked, without bone, half a pint of soup, and sixteen ounces of potatoes, weighed when boiled. At supper, one pint of gruel, sweetened with six drachms of molasses; bread, twenty ounces a day, with a liberal allowance of salt. The materials are all excellent. The scale of diet was based upon eighty actual experiments, conducted with reference to the influence on the health, mood, and improvement of the prisoner.

On entering his cell, the prisoner has a notice that "as a general rule convicts will be detained in separate confinement for nine months;" though, I may remark in passing, I found prisoners who had been detained for more, I think, than twelve months, for want of room at some other place. If he behaves well for six months he will be allowed to wear a badge, which will entitle him to receive a visit from his friends; at the end of three more months he will have a second badge, and be allowed a second visit; the badge also entitling him to receive gratuities amounting to 4*d.*, 6*d.*, or 8*d.* a week, according to the quality and quantity of the work performed. He is warned, however, that during his period of confinement, or employment on public works, he has no claim to wages or remuneration of any kind; the money is simply credited to his account, and accumulates to form a "gratuity" given him on discharge. During the stage of separate confinement, therefore, the inducements to good conduct are: the wearing of the badges, the visit of friends, the consciousness that the gratuity is accumulating, the acquirement of a character which may be available for remission of sentence in a later stage, and the avoidance of punishment. The punishments consist of the withdrawal of the badges and gratuity credit, the loss of character, complete seclusion from friends out of doors, consignment to more rigid confinement in the separate cells, bread and water, and the severer punishment of flogging. The sanitary state of the prison is shown in the condition of the infirmary, in which, when I visited the place, there were, I may say, two patients and a half—the third man being but half an invalid, and the others not seriously indisposed.

The routine of the day is this:—At 6 o'clock the prisoner is roused. Half an hour is allowed him to dress, to clean himself and his cell, and to prepare for work. From 6.30 to 7.30 he works in his cell. Half an hour is then allowed him for breakfast. The next hour, including the muster and return to cell, is devoted to the chapel. During each of the next two hours, half of the prisoners are taking their school instruction, and half are taking exercise. From 11 to 1 is devoted to work in the cell. An

hour is allowed for dinner ; the next after it for exercise ; from 3 to 5.30, work ; half an hour for supper ; from 6 to 8, work ; one hour for reading and writing ; and bed at 9 o'clock.

The convicts attend chapel every morning at a quarter past eight, and at four o'clock, a portion of the Holy Scriptures being read, plainly expounded, and enforced by exhortation. On Wednesday and Friday the Litany is adopted as the form of prayer, and after morning service on these two days instruction is given in psalmody by the organist, a man devoted to his work. On Sunday there are full morning and evening services, and a sermon, attended by the great body of the prisoners ; very few claiming exception on the score of belonging to other than the Established faith. The chaplain daily visits the cells, and he is assisted in the work of religious instruction by two Scripture-readers. I inspected the books kept by these gentlemen, and found some very peculiar entries. In most instances, however, the lessons gradually and sometimes very rapidly win upon the attention of their hearers. Once for all, let me remark that it is impossible to draw any very positive inference as to the reformation of the prisoners from his observations of a demeanour very properly urged upon him by the religious minister. It is scarcely in human nature that even the hardest heart should remain quite indifferent to admonitions urged on Divine authority by men studiously sympathetic, and in many cases naturally affectionate. The visit of the chaplain and the charitable kindness which he shows, not only ex-officio but from genuine good feeling, are such welcome breaks in the hard monotony of criminal life, that they must have their influence, and a very simple sort of cunning unquestionably teaches some prisoners that conformity is an easy and a useful mode of obtaining a prison character. From all the reports made to me, in all the prisons, I am inclined to think that this sort of conformity as a test of real reformation is not estimated so highly as it used to be.

I have a return of the periods of instruction given for a whole week, partly in class, partly in the cell. I find that the lowest sub-section receives during the week nine hours' instruction ; the two next above it, seven hours ; the next, six ; and the second, or highest class taught, four hours ; the first and smallest class is too much educated to need schooling, but the master's assistance is given to any of the men if they require it. The prisoners are allowed various books to retain in their cells, besides materials for reading and writing. They are also allowed to borrow books from an excellent library in the prison—the first class, two secular and one religious book, exchanged fortnightly ; and the other classes in proportion to their reading faculties. There is a good library for the subordinate officers of the prison, retained for their use during one year, and then merged in the general prison library. It includes many standard works, historical, scientific, philosophical, meditative, and miscellaneous. An interesting remark was made to me, spontaneously, by the librarians in several prisons of America, Ireland, and England, and it was most particu-

larly enforced by the assistant librarian at Chatham. It is, that as the range of selection has been extended from books of what is usually accounted an instructive or improving kind, to books of a more light and amusing character, and even to the most popular form of fiction, not only has the taste for reading improved and increased, but a demand for the graver, and even the most serious works, has increased in a corresponding ratio. The greater number still look to the *Leisure Hour*, *Half Hours with the Best Authors*, &c., but they rise through *Chambers's Journal* to popular works on history, to Macaulay, Hallam, and Sismondi, to natural history and the *Bridgewater Treatises*, and even to books of a still more philosophic character, including some on difficult subjects of pure science. At the same time, the demand for religious books exhibits a corresponding advance. In the list I find such works as *Josephus*, Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Milner's *Church History*. In several prisons I was told of the improved mental drill—if I may use the expression—promoted by the use of music. Like the cheerfulness and symmetry which distinguish the newest prisons, like the beauty of colour introduced into some of the chapels, the music assists in restoring that harmony of sensation which is broken by the discord of crime, and is in itself an insensible discipline for the mind.

From Pentonville, at the end of his nine months, the prisoner is carried to one of the public works prisons at Chatham, Portland, or Portsmouth. Portland, as most of your readers know, is a rock in the sea connected by a narrow spit of land with Weymouth, and forming, with that spit of land, the protection from sea and enemy on the right hand of the bay. The rock rises by a very steep ascent from the inland side to a height of about 600 feet, and crossing the midst of it between two hills not quite so peaked as those of Gibraltar, you descend to an elevated plain on the other side, and stand on the top of a cliff 400 feet by plumb line from the beach below. The villages upon which you come here and there, at no great distance from each other, look like a curious cross between an ordinary English country village, a remote Scotch town, and a watering place. The island generally seems to be divided between two parties,—a sort of miscellaneous country population, and the quarries, whose works are everywhere. There is not a tree within its four shores, except in Pennsylvania Park on the outward side, occupied lately by Mr. E. T. Smith. As you open upon the elevated plain which I have mentioned, the prison lies to the left of you. It is a vast structure with immense auxiliary grounds walled away from the rest of the island. On the right of you is the sea cliff; at the back lie the houses of the governor and the other officers, forming a complete village. The main body of the building, an extensive oblong, is built of wood, divided into great halls, each surrounded by four stories of cells precisely like those of Pentonville. Here the men sleep and live, except that on the ground floor there are two rooms holding about fifty men each, in which they are associated—places not unlike an ordinary barrack-room.

When I visited the prison there were in it 1,519 men. Out of these, 243 were in for three years, the lowest sentence; 724 for four years; 242 for six years, and seventeen were in for twenty years or for life. Of the sentences, 1,492 were for transportation, 27 penal servitude. There had already passed through the prison 9,072, 1,925 discharged by licence, and 7,147 discharged "otherwise," including pardon for special reasons, and simple expiry of sentence. Thus there have been in the prison altogether 10,591. The open works of the prison extend over a considerable space, as far as the Verne Hill, which must be half a mile distant or more. One elevated portion is divided off from the remainder of the island by a deep ditch, which is in one part two hundred feet deep, and, I think, seventy-five feet broad. The convicts are employed in the excavation of this ditch, in the dressing of the wall which forms its surface, in the formation of a sea-wall, and in the construction of minor outlying works of the fortification. They are also employed on extensive quarries, and in machine shops for the works, or for the use of the Admiralty. On the 29th of April last, 641 were thus labouring in the service of the Admiralty, 547 under the Ordnance, and 331 were in the prison either engaged as tradesmen in repairing the clothes of the prisoners, or in the attendance of the prison and its officers; for the prisoners are the servants of every establishment,—the bakers, the cooks, the storekeepers; always, of course, under proper superintendence. Posts of this kind are reserved as a sort of reward for the better behaved.

In the front of the prison is an elevated bank overlooking the yard within and the grounds without, a slanting road descending by each side to the main gate. The prisoners muster in the yard, divided when I saw them into twenty-one parties. Every man is then searched, to see that he has carried away nothing from his cell, and they are searched again on returning. From the cell they sometimes take food, which is against the rules, as they ought to eat their meals at the regularly appointed times. From the works and shops they have sometimes brought tools, or pieces of iron, either to attempt escape, or to attack their officers. The order at these musters is very marked; and although the men have frequently mustered in the dark, at half-past five on a winter's morning, I was told that the same order is preserved. Through the prison gate they march firmly and regularly to their work in the shop, the quarries, and the fortifications, at which, including the march out and home again, they spend about nine hours.

During the last nine months, an average number of 490 convicts have excavated 289,000 tons of stone in the ditches of the Verne Hill. Estimating the work since done at the price actually paid the contractor, before the present able Clerk of the Works, with his chief's authority, took the matter into his own hands, the department has made a clear gain of 15,000*l.*, after deducting the wear and tear of plant, &c. The masonry, in the casemates and magazines, could not be performed better. Accounts

are kept in every shop of all work executed, which tell, of course, both the cost of the establishment, and the state of the discipline. Large quantities of stone have been quarried by convicts, and sent off to other public works—to Plymouth, Portsea, Deptford, Chatham, &c. It is estimated that the stock of good Portland stone and roach-blocks at present piled up for use amounts to 80,000 tons. There are about twelve miles of railway in the quarries, made and maintained by convicts; who repair all the wagons, trucks, machinery, and other implements required for the works.

I was shown a series of covered arches, the casemated barracks for the soldiers in war time, beautifully constructed of stone, the roof lined with brick; every part having a truly artistic finish. For some reason or other, the supreme authorities—*not* in the Convict Department—determined that the larger portion of this work should be constructed by free labour under the contractor. The arches constructed by the convicts can certainly vie with the rest, and, to my eye, appeared to be even more precise and perfect in the finish. During the process, the convicts were animated to show that they could work as well as their neighbours; and one of them declared that he would allow any man I forgot how many bricks laid down at starting, and beat him within a given time, both in quantity and finish; and he did beat them all. That man appears to have been a genius at bricklaying; he was proud of it, and he animated his comrades by his own enthusiastic zeal. But the men generally are civil in their demeanour, particularly to those officers who encourage them by a friendly and sympathetic manner; and the Clerk of the Works told me that, whatever exertions he might call for, the convicts never showed the slightest impatience or reluctance.

No doubt the labour, which is energetic though not excessive, contributes to the vigour of the men;—and of their appetites: so the dietary is commensurate. For breakfast, they have twelve ounces of bread made of ten ounces of flour, with a small quantity of potato and other necessary ingredients; one pint of tea, with three quarters of an ounce of sugar, and two ounces of milk. Dinner, on four days of the week, six ounces of meat clear of bone, one pound of potatoes, and a six-ounce loaf. When potatoes are bad, rice is given. For supper, one pint of gruel, made of two ounces of oatmeal, and a six-ounce loaf of bread. On three days of the week, one pint of cocoa is given in lieu of tea at breakfast. It is made of three quarters of an ounce of cocoa, three quarters of an ounce of molasses, with two ounces of milk. On these days the dinner is varied: five ounces of meat are given free of bone, with one pint of soup, and ten ounces of pudding. The soup is made from the boiling down of the meat, but in it are one ounce of barley, half an ounce of carrots and turnips, half an ounce of onions, with a fair allowance of pepper and salt. The pudding is made with five ounces of flour and three quarters of an ounce of suet. There are few families in London which command better materials. The tea is genuine, and is of excellent quality. Strange to say, the cocoa is genuine; for it is an article that you do not often meet in so

thoroughly unadulterated a condition, and it is a first-rate specimen. The other ingredients are all of the same high standard. The cooking is excellent ; better, far better, than in most ordinary inns. Those prisoners who have advanced to the first stage of the highest class are allowed, on Sundays, as an addition to the ordinary fare, two ounces of cheese, three ounces of bread, half a pint of beer, and tea for supper, instead of gruel, if they like it. The prisoners in the fourth stage receive the same as the third, with the addition of a small pudding, made of flour, suet, milk, and molasses ; and baked mutton, in lieu of beef, on Thursdays and Fridays, and baked beef on Sundays and Mondays. The whole body of convicts, therefore, decidedly feed well, and the advanced convicts enjoy rather luxurious fare. These extra boons were amongst the favours granted to convicts, partly as incentives to good conduct, but partly as a make-weight for the grievance when transportation was abolished ; the fourth stage men being men sentenced to transportation under the Act of 1853 without any power of commuting their sentence. Prisoners who are put to "light work" are allowed only one half of every article issued to the rest, as a check upon any malingering pretence of failure in bodily strength.

On the 29th of April there were in the infirmary twenty-two prisoners, rather a large proportion of these suffering from accidents more or less severe. The nature of the work subjects the men to these accidents ; but that liability is more than compensated by the average health, which is very feebly indicated by the statistics of the infirmary. Nothing struck me more than the bright and healthy look of the prisoners' eyes throughout the whole body. It is far above the average in the population out of doors, and is ascribable unquestionably to abundance of outdoor exercise, regular habits, sufficient feeding, and enforced temperance. Though the separate confinement at Pentonville is somewhat depressing, they improve even there; but at Portland they rapidly became vigorous.

For certain purposes the six week days are divided into six parts ; all the prisoners devote the latter half of Saturday afternoon to extra cleaning of their cells ; and by the way, once a week every man has a bath in excellent baths,—another introduction to the better training found in social grades far above that from which most convicts are drawn. A relay of the prisoners is every day kept at the prison for the school class, so that there is always one-eleventh of the whole number at home in school. The schoolroom is the chapel. These arrangements are open to serious question. The chapel ought not to be the schoolroom. The employment of the prisoners on public works renders it difficult, I cannot say impossible, to keep them at home for daily school, and it is only too obvious that half a day's schooling once a week, part of the time devoted to writing private letters, cannot be so efficacious as daily teaching, even in a brief lesson. The letters are sometimes stopped for being of an improper character : those letters were written in the chapel.

According to his conduct the prisoner is placed in the first, second, or third class, and the classes themselves are subdivided into "stages."

He is also allowed a gratuity, calculated under three heads—class, stage, and industry; under the two first he may be considered to obtain this money reward for his prison discipline generally; the “industry” refers to his work only. Besides the specific punishment, every prison offence involves the liability to some forfeiture of the remission of the period for confinement allowed by the Act of 1857, and at the same time involves a retardation of the advanced stages. The maximum amount which a convict may earn towards his gratuity in one week is 1s. 11d.

Every warden in charge of a working party, or of a cell, keeps an account, in which the prisoner’s conduct for order or for industry is entered—“bad,” “indifferent,” “ordinary,” “good,” and “very good.” But a card is given to each man, on which the total of his gratuity is entered monthly. He can always have access to the chief warden, or to the Governor, to complain of any injustice; and at an examination of the kind which I attended, I saw that the men exercise their right very freely. Amongst other mementoes of good conduct is the badge which the prisoner wears upon his arm, showing the number of months that the prisoner has behaved well out of his sentence and of his whole past sojourn in the prison. The working of this system will be best illustrated in individual cases.

N. S., aged 23, unmarried, was convicted at the sessions of a northern town, on the 7th of December, 1857. He was accused of breaking into a warehouse and stealing from it, and he was sentenced to four years’ penal servitude. He had been convicted at his own town three times in the year 1856, and once at another town in 1857; his offences being the illegal possession of goods, or actual stealing. His conduct in those prisons had been “good.” He was confined until the 9th of October at Wakefield, and arrived at Portland in the lowest class.* During the period of his stay he was punished seven times; his offences being talking on parade; fighting at labour; insubordination and insolence; refusing to assist in carrying the dinner; having some articles in his possession to which he had no right—a tin bottle, a piece of looking-glass, and a piece of cheese; and being irreverent in chapel. For these offences he had various terms of bread and water; he was degraded from the first to the second class, then to the third class; and on the seven different occasions he forfeited forty-five of the days which would otherwise have been allowed him out of his total sentence for discharge on ticket-of-leave. But here comes into play the operation of another rule. It is thought undesirable to deprive the prisoner of hope; and if after punishment he has behaved well, he may come before the visiting director, who “remit[s]” some portion of the days he has already forfeited. So that ultimately N. S. only lost twenty days instead of forty-five. His conduct was often “very good,” and in the latter part of his time was decidedly good. He left the prison on the 5th of April, 1861, clothed in an ordinary labourer’s dress, with the ticket-of-licence, the address of the Discharged Prisoners’ Aid Society, his railway ticket, and

2*l.* 10*s.* 3*d.* due to him on his gratuity of 6*l.* 12*s.* 3*d.* In November, 1858, he had expressed a wish to go to Australia, but he had not earned the privilege. When he came to Portland he could neither read nor write; his progress in the prison school had been "fair."

S. D., aged 30, a single man, who could read and write imperfectly, was convicted in a south-eastern county, in January, 1858, of larceny. He had been convicted five times before of begging, vagrancy, and stealing. His conduct in previous prisons had been good, and he arrived from Pentonville on the 21st of January, 1859, at Portland. He was punished fourteen times; his offences were—the use of insubordinate language; trying to keep a fellow-prisoner from his work; refusing to work at various times; refusing to turn out for labour; refusing to attend chapel; threatening an officer who had reported him; trying to open his cell-window by removing the putty; carrying a piece of iron bar to his cell; breaking his cell window, and removing the screws from the iron work. After one of these offences, while in the separate cells, where he could not well commit any offence, he behaved decently, and was allowed to return to labour. But his punishments were various—forfeitures of remission days, amounting in all to ninety-four, half-diet, or bread and water, and the wearing of cross-irons, with particoloured clothing; one shoulder and one leg being clothed in yellow for those prisoners who attempt escape, and in black for those who use violence towards their officers. "I consider this prisoner," says the Governor in the general remarks on his record, "to be a man of very low intellect." The man has not yet worked out his time. I observe that his conduct at work has for some time latterly been very good.

D. T., aged 22, was sentenced at a town in the north of England to four years' penal servitude. He was now convicted of larceny, had been convicted twice before, and accused a third time, but acquitted. He was received on the 6th of September, 1858, from Millbank, and arrived as a first-class prisoner. His conduct throughout was very good; he was never punished, and was discharged at the earliest possible date, with a prison character as "exemplary," 2*l.* 12*s.* 3*d.* out of 9*l.* 15*s.* 5*d.* due to him, and the address of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society. By searching the records of the society I found that this prisoner did not use the address, possibly because his father had said that he would find him employment. Nor did N. S. apply to the society.

I have before me a return of the total number of reports for punishment brought before the Governor at Portland from the 1st of April, 1860, to the 31st of March, 1861. The total number of offences was 527, and the punishments were of the kind I have already indicated. In 243 cases the prisoners were reduced in class; in nine cases they were corporally punished, the number of lashes being 312 in all. Fighting, insubordination, insolence, and idleness, represent a large proportion of the bad conduct. There were nine cases of assaults on prison officers; eighteen of destroying public property. In 101 cases the offence was the having

prohibited articles, including tobacco, and "trafficking," that is, trying to corrupt fellow prisoners or officers. These attempts are often detected; I have no evidence that they always fail. A good many of the offences were committed by the same prisoner, so that the proportion of individual misconduct within the prison is not very great.

I have before me similar returns for Chatham prison, where, speaking generally, the system is the same. The grand differences which I noticed are two. The main prison is in the form of a great T, the interior, if I remember rightly, being broader than the wings at Pentonville, but not so broad as the halls at Portland. And the convicts are employed on Saint Mary's Island in forming a great naval yard, so far up the Medway in the rear of Sheerness, and, therefore, safer from any invading force. The island is surrounded by deep water, and is completely viewed from the prison grounds. When I was at Chatham there were 800 prisoners in all:—35 in the infirmary; 16 in the separate cells; 209 engaged in repairing the clothes, washing, and other work within the prison; and 540 on the public works. On the day of my visit the rain fell heavily, and the men were mostly employed in their sheds, so that the scene was not so cheerful as it was at Portland; but I observed no want of alacrity.

When I visited Portsmouth Convict establishment on the 2nd of May, there were 984 prisoners within the confines. Of these 948 were sentenced to "penal servitude," 33 of them under the new Act; 30 to "transportation," all but four under the old Act. There were 6 men sentenced by courts-martial in China, and their case was peculiarly hard. The information having by some chance been mislaid, there was no record of their sentence or of previous conduct, and nothing to guide the allotment of their proper position in the Portsmouth prison. Of the total number there were engaged in the prison wards, 136; engaged on the public works, 663; in school, 91; in the infirmary, 31; under report for bad conduct, 73; on Southsea Common, 50. I had the opportunity of assisting at the interview which Captain Gambier gave to the men who desired to speak to the visiting Director, and here I saw the working of the remissions. I also assisted at a remarkable scene, the trial of one of the prisoners who had been leader of a recent outbreak in the Dock-yard shops. The convicts had suddenly risen on their officers, armed with chain-hooks—a sort of exasperated iron paraphrase of the hunting stick which it was the fashion for "gents" to carry a few years back. The man was a remarkably well-grown young fellow; he had as savage a countenance as you could have encountered on Finchley Common a hundred years ago, but his bearing here was subdued and even melancholy. In the room were two warders, one had been nearly killed, and the other much hurt. Their assailant was now surrounded by stout guards, and, although he was chained, a sharp eye was evidently kept upon his movements. It was a difficult case to treat. The punishments in prison for desperate characters are sometimes so constantly repeated that they lose their efficacy; nay, as a distinguished officer

observed to me, the frequent repetition becomes at last "even cruel." I was obliged to depart before the trial of the other prisoners, but I understood that this man, who evidently expected some dreadful penalty, was to receive a certain number of lashes.

One of the most important improvements in the English system I witnessed in full play at Portsmouth: it is the "special service class," in which 50 men, as I have already mentioned, were engaged upon works on Southsea Common. Here the men are employed, on a perfectly open ground, in a useful work. They are, however, commanded by warders in uniform; there is an armed guard on the watch; they wear the prison dress. That they felt the humiliation of this exposure I had manifest proof in the request made by one man to the Visiting Director that he might be brought back from the special class, and be employed in the prison, because he had friends who passed the place where he worked and recognized him. When the request came before the Visiting Director, he appeared to me inclined to treat it as an attempt at malingering; but orders had already been given by the Governor that the man should be removed to another ground where he would be less seen. It is obvious, however, that, under the actual circumstances, the "promotion" to this exposed class is not always appreciated by the men; and thus, although it is intended as an incentive to good conduct, in some cases it operates as the reverse. An earnest advocate of this special class is Captain Rose, in whom I was able to discern, even on a first and brief acquaintance, an active and discriminating mind, a remarkably clear insight into the working of motives, and a comprehensive grasp of the whole subject of prison discipline. Curiously enough, when the plan was first proposed, he expressed doubts as to a suggestion of Sir Joshua Jebb's, that the prison dress should be discarded for men thus employed out of bounds. On the other hand, Captain Rose is now anxious to lead forth a much larger body of men—two hundred he said—on to a common which he mentioned, there to employ them without prison dress, and, if I remember rightly, without guard. The special class plan has now been tried for three years, and so far as it has been carried, it has been attended with marked success. On an average the work done is fully equal to that performed by free labour, and the men are more tractable.

Not a hundred miles from Portsmouth I had already found myself walking about fields in which were employed labourers who could not very readily have been distinguished from ordinary workmen, except that there was an unaccustomed youthfulness in the general range of their ages. They appeared to me to be working well, and the bailiff of the large farm to which they were attached spoke of them as quite up to the average. In doing so I could see that he was putting a check upon himself to be what is called "moderate." This farm is attached to Parkhurst Prison, which is conducted much on what are called reformatory principles. So much so, indeed, that the actual reformatories have, to a great extent, abstracted from the population of Parkhurst, and the juvenile

ward particularly has been all but suppressed and merged in other wards. From Millbank boys under seventeen years of age who are sentenced to penal servitude are consigned to Parkhurst; and boys under seventeen, who have been sentenced to one or two years' imprisonment in county jails are also sent to Parkhurst, in both cases under the Secretary of State's warrant. On arrival the prisoner is first placed in what is termed the "probationary ward," where he has a cell to himself. Of these cells there are about 123. As soon as possible after his arrival the Governor explains to him his position, tells him the conditions of the prison, the purpose for which he is sent there, and his future prospects; endeavouring to make him understand how much his future welfare will be affected by his own behaviour during confinement. It happens that Parkhurst Prison has, and has long had, for its Governor a man peculiarly able to carry out this explanatory instruction. I was unlucky enough to miss Captain Hall; I believe we passed each other on the pier when I left the island; but I had many evidences, including the very best which a man can have short of personal intimacy, that Captain Hall throws the whole heart of a conscientious English gentleman into his work, and I have in my hands the most sufficient evidence of his thorough knowledge of the subject, and his power of clear statement. In the cell of the probationary ward the boy sleeps, takes his meals, and prepares his lessons for school; but the separate system which was strictly enforced when this ward was first occupied in 1844, and for some time afterwards, has, of late years, been very much relaxed. At present the separation is limited to the hours passed within the cell. The boys attend school in association, and are allowed to play together in the exercise yard during the periods allotted to recreation, three times a day. Each boy is allowed to attend school three hours in the forenoon daily, and for the same length of time in the afternoon of four days in the week; the afternoons of Wednesday and Saturday being occupied in scouring, sweeping, and cleansing the corridor, staircases, cells, and passages of the ward. Besides his hammock and bedding, table, stool, and other necessary furniture for the cell, including a set of blacking-brushes and a hand broom, each boy has a Bible, Prayer-book, and Hymn-book, a slate, and lesson-books, and also an interesting volume from the prison library, which is changed for him once a week. Ceaseless attention is paid to personal cleanliness; baths being provided and regularly used. The medical officer is in daily attendance, so that the most trivial ailments are promptly attended to and carefully treated. Each section of the general wards contains from thirty to thirty-six prisoners, with two officers, a warden, and an assistant warden. The warden makes a weekly report to the Governor of the conduct and industry of each boy under his charge, and of the daily employments of his section. In case of continued bad conduct the term of the probationary ward may be prolonged to five months, but at that time or sooner the boy is transferred to the general wards, where he is in association with others during the whole day, and is in separation only at night. The diet is the same

as in the probationary ward. The boy is employed at field labour on the prison farm from eight in the morning till noon, and from one till six, excepting when it comes to his turn to attend school, as it does to each for one forenoon of four hours and one afternoon of five hours in every week.

As soon as any boy has passed four entire months in the general wards without having been punished for any offence against the rules, a good-conduct badge is granted to him in the shape of a shield of red cloth with the number 2 cut out and shown on white cloth underneath. This badge is sewn on the right sleeve of the boy's jacket; and, so long as he wears it without disgrace, he is allowed to correspond with his parents or other friends once in every three months; to have threepence per week credited to his account; to have a goodly hunk of baked plum-pudding added to his dinner every Sunday, and to attend a sort of reading and writing party from seven till eight o'clock P.M. on each week day.

When a boy has worn the first badge for three months without any prison punishment, it is exchanged for a similar badge with 1 in white cloth on a red shield. When badge "1 red" has been worn for three clear months without disgrace, it is exchanged for "2 blue," the numeral on a blue shield, and sixpence a week is accredited to this boy's account. At the end of six more months he may obtain number "1 blue." It is understood that every report for misconduct involving punishment carries with it a privation of these privileges, or suspension for a time. When number 1 blue has been worn for eight months, and the lad arrives within eighteen months of the expiration of his sentence, if he has behaved well he is placed in "the second division of the liberty class," where he is allowed to write to his friends once a week, and threepence a week additional is accredited to his gratuity. In nine months more he is advanced to the first division of the liberty class, and here the change is very marked. The boys are allowed to lay aside the prison garb, and to dress in a plain mechanic's working suit, and also to have some little variations from the ordinary diet of the prison. To each of the boys with the highest badge is allotted a small garden, in which he is allowed to work in summer evenings, and at recreation times during the day. A table in the Director's report on the Convict Prisons for 1853, is peculiarly interesting as showing the effect of *immediate* rewards on the conduct of the boys in the general wards. In the four previous years, the total number of boys in the general wards ranged from 518 to 413. In 1849 there were 4,176 offences, or 850 per cent., and only 23 per cent. of boys unpunished. There was then no incentive to good conduct. In 1850, hours of labour were increased, of school diminished, and badges were introduced: offences, 2,913, or 571 per cent.; unpunished, 31 per cent. In 1851, more labour, several rewards introduced: offences, 1,025, or 209·9 per cent.; unpunished, 44·24 per cent. 1852, reward system in full operation: offences, 708, or 171·4 per cent.; unpunished, 69·2 per cent.

The boys in the "liberty classes" are placed in various little posts of trust and confidence, and are allowed to go about the various parts of the establishment without immediate surveillance—a relaxation of discipline which they highly value, and are very careful not to forfeit by any transgression or abuse of the indulgence.

The whole object of the training at Parkhurst is to fit boys for useful and creditable life when restored to liberty; and I am told that very many of them are brought to co-operate willingly in the system to which they are subjected.

I must, for the present, pass over the female department of Convict Prisons in the most brief and rapid manner, although the subject is full of interest. Millbank is the first dépôt for all convict prisoners who reach the metropolis, female as well as male. Here I find in command as matron, Mrs. Gibson, who brings a clear head and a hopeful heart to the work, and to whom I owe particular thanks for great pains taken in making me understand the system and its results. The newly arrived prisoner is placed in the separate cell of a probation class, where she remains six months more; and then she enters the first class; the gratuities for the third class being 4*d.*; for the second, ranging from 5*d.* to 7*d.*; for the first, from 6*d.* to 8*d.*, according to the "stages." For the first two months after reception, the women are employed in coir picking; the next five months in bag-making, or other rough work; then in coarse needlework. From the first class are selected the cooks, cleaners, and laundry-women. There is a penal class. Occasionally there are violent ebullitions of temper amongst the women; but the matron remarks, with equal charity and sagacity, that difficult as the causes of such ebullitions may be to trace—difficult of appreciation by us who have, in habits of thought, exercised judgment, and comparatively untold surrounding advantages, the very reverse of the convict's training—the exciting causes are no doubt correlative to the effects exhibited. Remarks like this "turn up" wherever you find an active and independent mind brought to bear upon the broad field of penal discipline. It is an exceedingly important branch of the whole subject, and most certainly it has not been more than tentatively opened. We have to deal with every man whom we would influence through *his* motives, not ours. Mrs. Gibson makes another remark which is the exact converse of what I have heard from sagacious men in all prisons, and from the Secretary of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society: she tells me that the most refractory prisoner is not of necessity the worst woman; it is to be believed that "she will grow worse or better according to the nature and amount of influences brought to bear upon her." In the same way it has been seen that the most conforming of prison characters is certainly not absolute proof of reformation.

From Millbank, at the expiry of ten or twelve months, the woman passes to Brixton; an old prison enlarged. Its form now is something

like that of a bow with the middle third of the string absent ; the string being the new "wings." The general principles of its cellular construction in the new part resemble those of the male prisons. The work is not so coarse as that at Millbank. For the most part the women behave well ; the official record of the bad exceptions showing an average of three or four per cent. on the whole number. Some of these are "so bad," remarks a director, "that they may be regarded as morally insane." I saw such a case in the refractory ward ; a woman whom exasperating influences seemed to deprive of all control over her temper or tongue. She had not a bad face, but she looked like a fighting giantess, much in the same sort of state with Cruiser when Mr. Rarey took him in hand ; or with a Bermuda prisoner whom I saw on his arrival at Dublin. The first comers are sent to the old prison cell ; one wing is reserved for the second-class prisoners, and another for the first. Silence is enforced during certain hours, order and quiet at all times. The occupations of the women are, washing for their own staff of officers, for themselves, and for the male convicts at Millbank and Pentonville, needlework for all the convict prisons, and slop-work for commercial dealers. The women's shoes are made at Pentonville, their "liberty boots," in which they leave the prison, at Parkhurst. Save those who are carried on to Fulham, the women are discharged from Brixton.

At Fulham is the "Refuge," which bears somewhat the same relation to the female prisons that the Golden Bridge or the Protestant Refuge does to the female Convict Prisons in Ireland. The Refuge was, I think, full when I visited it. The women are specially trained for domestic service, with a view to imparting active and industrious habits, a knowledge of baking, cooking, laundry, and housework. The establishment enjoys the advantage of being close to the residence of the Chairman of Convict Directors, whose wife, Lady Amelia Jebb, takes an active interest in promoting the objects of this adult Reformatory. It is a leading idea that in obtaining employment out of doors the most suitable places for the women are those where only one servant is kept, and I am told that many would be well adapted as farm-servants. One of the occupations here is washing, which is done upon a vast scale. In the week ending on the 20th of April, 1861, there were 311 dozen of pieces washed for the convict establishments, in a total of 1,023 dozen ; the remainder being on private account. The total earnings of the week were 43*l.* 14*s.* 6*½d.*; the labour of the women being reckoned at a value only a few pence short of 35*l.* In some instances the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society helps the outgoing prisoner; and, as in the case of male prisoners, the woman only draws her gratuity on showing that she is honestly employed. I have before me some score of letters addressed to the excellent lady superintendent, Mrs. Harpour, which indicate that many who have left the Refuge retain for it a sense of attachment and protection.

I have now come to the momentous question of discharge. On leaving the place of his confinement, the prisoner does not instantly throw off his responsibility. Should he be a thoroughly "bad" man, indeed, without gratuity or character, I see nothing that is to be done but to open the door and let him forth, with a tolerable certainty that he will not very long be out of gaol. And let me remark, in passing, that the release of such a man amounts to nothing more than giving a holiday to an evidently confirmed malefactor, in order that he may do an injury to somebody as the warrant for continuing his residence in one of her Majesty's convict prisons. So soon as the prisoner is entitled to his discharge, he is brought before the Visiting Director, with a statement of particulars respecting his antecedents and prospects, specifying whether he seeks the help of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, or not. In some cases the prisoner has no prospects, no home or friends to receive him, no reference for employment; but he may be a seaman, or a labourer, with a fair chance of getting work when he goes out. In some cases, previous inquiry, most often through the parish minister, paves the way for placing the prisoner hopefully. In many cases the man wants to emigrate. He leaves the prison, as I have already intimated, with a new suit of clothes, an instalment of his gratuity, and a memorandum directing him to obtain the certificate of a magistrate, or of a parish clergyman, in order that he may draw the balance of his gratuity, sometimes paid in two instalments, according to the total amount, at the expiry of two, three, or four months. A record is kept of the date at which the prisoner is discharged, with the immediate result of his efforts to obtain employment. The chaplains of the prisons are very active, the clerical machinery being obviously available for following the prisoner a short way on his resumed journey in the open world. Many a man writes to his reverend adviser, and, in some instances, the correspondence is protracted. I have numbers of letters before me, both by men and women, some by rather "distinguished" convicts, all expressing gratitude and affection—the majority speaking well of present condition and prospects, and some few confessing, with equal ardour and contrition, to backslidings. The number of prisoners recommended for discharge from Portland, in June, 1861, is 54. Of these, 10 have offers of employment, 14 will be assisted by the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, 23 have friends who will give them homes, 7 have neither home nor the offer of employment. I have the returns of prisoners discharged up to the end of the quarter ending March 31, 1861; the total number was 1,101. Of these, there were satisfactory reports for 773, unsatisfactory of 91, no information of 319—including 22 recently discharged.

Looking upon the establishments as a whole, there is no doubt that they afford opportunities for developing the industrial faculties of men, women, and boys who have been otherwise without training. At a shop on the Verne Hill, in Portland, the very intelligent Principal Warder, Mr. Maddock, called my attention to some window sashes, which had been made for the buildings in progress, and finished with completeness and

exactness. They were the work of two prisoners, aged twenty and twenty-one. The elder served for twelve months in a carpenter's shop; left that drudgery little trained to his craft, and became a gentleman's valet; diversifying his emoluments with a continuous system of petty plunder, which culminated in a plate robbery to the amount of 3,000*l.*, and a sentence to penal servitude. The younger, after serving a pianoforte-maker for a short time, fell into bad company, was convicted several times, with imprisonment for periods ranging from two to twelve months, and passed through a sentence of penal servitude to the practical school at Portland. Instances in which this training is turned to future account were mentioned to me in the same place. A man, who had been a thief from childhood, learned the trade of a stone-cutter at Portland, which he left about a year ago, and he is now at regular work as a stone-cutter at one of the principal yards in London. Two other men, one convicted of a post-office robbery, and another twice convicted for stealing, after they had been at Portland, found work at the Houses of Parliament; then became leading men in two different building yards of London; and, finally, still as leading men, emigrated to an important colony, with a five years' engagement. I have similar cases from Parkhurst, supplied me by the Governor and his very intelligent assistant, Mr. George Shirlaw, to whom prisoners who have been discharged spontaneously communicate their actual position. One youth proudly showed Mr. Shirlaw his horny hands as evidence that he still works hard at shoemaking, while his brother, who was "a plague" at Parkhurst, has employment in the City, and is now "a comfort to his old mother,"—both being pledged to visit their prison when the summer excursion trains begin. Another case is that of a man who keeps an humble stall in a leading street of a great town, under patronage of a tradesman, who is in his rear, and who is proud of his protégé. Another, on first going forth, obtained employment as a painter; was driven away by the behaviour of his comrades, who had found out his antecedents; left his work and went back to see "what Mr. Shirlaw would do for him." He obtained fresh employment, rose to be a foreman, and is now earning 24*s.* a week in London. Last year a young soldier visited the Governor to thank him for the discipline he had undergone at Parkhurst, which he felt had saved him punishment in the army. Another young man is holding an honourable post as a teacher in a public department; another is a private teacher. Another, having no home, was advised to enlist: he became servant to his commanding officer, who is high in the service, and who trusted him with all his things. Subsequently, however, he came to consult the Governor on an apprehension which he had that he might be recognized by two or three men in the ranks who had been in the prison. The Governor advised him to go straight to his master and tell him unreservedly; which he did, the master replying that he should never mistrust him until he had personal cause. One of the remarkable traits of Parkhurst is, that inmates who have left it, and have become tradesmen, soldiers, seamen in

the navy or merchant service, teachers, clerks, or anything else, thus revisit the island, to see the Governor, and not unfrequently the officers who have punished them. I have several other such stories, including that of a young man who left Parkhurst in 1850, is now doing well as a rising tradesman, and last summer visited "the old place" with *his wife*, to thank his friend the Governor for the repeated correction which his long-protracted waywardness had made necessary. Amongst these better specimens are lads who first come with a very bad character, looking low in intellect and in moral sense, but brighten up, and after all turn out very satisfactorily. One instance I saw recorded was very interesting: it was the case of a youth who had gone out as a promising soldier, and who had come to the prison with a bad character from a previous prison, and the remark volunteered by a sagacious magistrate, that he was evidently of a low disposition, with no chance of being reformed. A hopeful incident appears but recently to have developed itself. Several captains of merchant ships have taken lads directly from the institution. A gentleman residing in a neighbouring county engaged a young man as his servant before liberation, and there is reason to believe that the engagement has turned out well on both sides. A tradesman in the immediate neighbourhood has taken a lad from the prison.

There are still desperate difficulties in the way of prisoners who do not happen to fall in with these favourable patronizers. The excellent Governor of Parkhurst writes, "If we feel indignation at learning that some prisoner just liberated has been reconvicted, let us remember that his relapse has been caused by circumstances beyond the control of the individual,"—the stain of a prison character, the tale-bearing of enemies, total absence of friends. Amongst those prisoners who have no prospect on leaving prison, and who are offered the assistance of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, the majority decline for reasons not positively known, but probably because they apprehend some curtailment of their liberty.

I have already several times mentioned the Prisoners' Aid Society, which has become a sort of volunteer auxiliary branch of the Convict Department. It is regularly recognized by the officials, who now habitually record whether or not the prisoners accept the aid proffered to them by the Society. The Society began its operations in June, 1857. Amongst its leading men are Lord Carlisle, Lord Shaftesbury, Mr. Adderley, Mr. Samuel Gurney, Sir Harry Verney, and other practical philanthropists. The total number of cases stated in the last report is 1,895; but the number shows a progressive increase, 779 being included in the last year. Of the total number, 461 have been helped to emigrate. The Society takes care of the man's money, looks out for employment, helps the emigrant with advice and information, and sometimes, but by no means in all cases, adds a few shillings. Women are provided with a lodging, under the superintendence of a matron. I was enabled to inspect the books of the Society, the secretary most obligingly supplying me with every information on the cases I turned up. Although in most instances

the information accruing to the Society continues but a few months after the prisoner is discharged, there is not the slightest doubt on my mind that to great numbers it bridges over the chasm between a life of crime and an honest life, and in some instances the most positive information is obtained.

I have made my report ; striving to state, as plainly as I can in the time and space, what I have seen, and what I have been told. I wish in this paper to avoid the controversial part of the subject ; but I know that I should disappoint most readers, especially those who are immediately interested in the question on both sides of St. George's Channel, if I neglected to note the principal points which struck me as marking the difference between the English and the Irish convict systems.

The Irish system sprang, to a great extent, from an independent and original starting point. A member of a commission appointed to inquire into abuses—a man who did not either avoid or conceal his adoption of others' experience—suggested an application of Maconochie's principles with completely original adjuncts of his own. I have already explained how the English system sprang up from the growth of our convict population, the abolition of the hulks, successive reforms in prison management, and the pressure caused by the stoppage of transportation. The system claims to be judged by its success in meeting those requirements on principles officially laid down in 1842, with new arrangements, of new buildings, public works, &c. ; and it claims to have the "difficulties" entailed by those requirements fairly considered.

In Ireland, on the first admission of the prisoner, he is placed in separate confinement, without work. From that point he is made to feel that his own immediate condition is dependent upon his conduct, his attention to schooling, and his industry. At no distant date he can thus promote himself to a gradually enlarged freedom of action—first to a better position in the ordinary prison; then to the Intermediate stage, where, with a diet still severe, there is fixed residence but no punishment, some personal freedom even in such things as the handling of money, and higher instruction ; and so, ultimately, to the ticket-of-leave, a sort of humble wardship with a probationary freedom out in real life, and actual employment. The English system presents no such direct progressive advance. Men are put at once to the work in the first or "probationary" stage of separate confinement, and they have instruction in various industrial avocations. The instruction afforded at that stage is only in a small minority of cases applicable to the next and more long-continued stages of employment on the public works, and at the dockyards—the last universally condemned as an intermittent, half-idling employment. There is no Intermediate stage.

It is of course impossible that the intercourse which the men attempt even in the elliptical walks of Pentonville, can be prevented in the asso-

ciated gangs of Chatham and Portland; from none of the officers of the public works prisons, whose reserve I respected too much for any attempt to "draw them out," had I any evidence to gainsay the manifest opportunity for mischief and contamination in the public works; and that it does take place I have positive information, accidentally derived from those who have mingled among the convicts themselves.

In Ireland there is no indulgence shown to the convicts on the personal discretion or kindness of a Visiting Director; but the rigour enforced at first is tightened or relaxed entirely by the conduct of the prisoner himself. He cannot sin, relying on indulgence afterwards. In England, misconduct forfeits some of the days that would be remitted from the original sentence; but those days may afterwards be re-granted by the Visiting Director.

In Ireland, information about convicts discharged is obtained by direct personal intercourse. The statistics are positive; the accounts of the convicts extend over years; in some cases, within my personal examination, the accounts continued for three and four years after discharge. The English information is obtained mainly through the filling up of forms issued from the central department. The English statistics yield an account of the convict, at the most, for four months after his discharge; beyond that they are negative.

I have repeatedly mentioned the order which upon the whole is preserved amongst the convicts; but I cannot close this paper without observing how impossible it is to forget that there have been outbreaks at all the male prisons. Those at Chatham, on the 11th February last, the 20th March, and the 16th April, have been reported in the public papers, the punishment extending to hundreds who had obtained prison characters for *good conduct*. The public reports of these tumults are said to have been exaggerated, especially of the second. In the third outbreak a man who had complained against a warden at the head of his party, in order to get himself removed to another party, induced his comrades to leave work for ten minutes. He was in prison for the third conviction, and his chief helpmate in the outbreak was also in for his third conviction. I have mentioned the trial of the man who was tried for a very savage outbreak in Portsmouth Docks. I stood on the Verne Hill, the scene of the serious outbreak in the Portland Prison. We have read how some five young men at Parkhurst murderously attacked a warden in the fields this month. I heard something of the formidable outbreak at Dartmoor a few years since, when, I have been told, though on no official authority, one or two of the wards were left in charge of a convict; and the papers report the recent attempt of three convicts to escape from Dartmoor. I will enter into no inquiry as to the causes of these tumults and irregularities. I have not yet received any satisfactory report of the facts such as I am sure could be brought forward under pressure of counsel in a court of law; and I seldom care to go beyond facts into surmises or constructive interpretations.

Individualization is admitted by the convict prison authorities, including the very highest in England, to exercise a most important influence for good. It is a guiding principle in the Irish system, from the admission of a prisoner to the expiry of his ticket-of-licence. Partially attempted in the earliest and much shorter stage, the English system exhibits no attempt to pursue the rule in the public works prisons.

I am well aware that objections are urged against smaller establishments in England, on the score that public works cannot be carried on with small bodies of men; that the expenses would be greater; that the system of convict discipline would be exhibited in a less deterrent aspect; that the English police would not be available to assist in working the system; and that in fairness to the men the use of "marks" for school progress would not be compatible with employment on public works. In my present report I am scrupulously abstaining from controversy, and I need not go into the last question, since the subject of my inquiry has not been the best means of promoting public works, but the best correctional discipline for convicts. With regard to the other objections, I will limit myself to two remarks:—

1. The things declared impossible, I showed in my report on the Irish system to be accomplished facts.

2. In my present report I have shown that some of the elements exist in England. This is made evident by the results obtained at Parkhurst, where I saw boys working in the open field; by the avowed wish of Captain Rose, based on his own experience, to expand the special class at Southsea into a more genuine Intermediate stage, on some open but more secluded common; and by the successes of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, and of Captain Hall, even among the neighbours of his own establishment, in getting good places for known convicts. In the presence of facts like these, it would be futile to occupy more space in debating what "would be;" for where we have known facts and opportunity for further tests, no value can attach to any such discussions in the subjunctive mood.

The only opinion I feel at present warranted in expressing is, that the whole subject—the arbitrary limitation of certain attained successes to Ireland, the arrest of a like progress in England, and the unexplained restrictions put upon Mr. Childers's Committee of the Commons on Australian transportation, and its final abandonment—appear to me to challenge a far more authoritative investigation and review than any which could be given to it by a private inquirer, however painstaking, and however handsomely assisted, as I have been, by every man concerned, from the humblest warder to Sir Joshua Jebb himself. For the question involved is nothing more nor less than this—Do we not already know the means of diminishing the positive amount of misery through criminal depravity in this land, and of proportionately contracting its sources for the future?

A Morning Party.



HEY sometimes call it a "breakfast;" and if we consider that people have not only taken that meal about six hours before, but since then in all human probability have eaten a good lunch, the appropriateness of the name must be obvious to all. The reason why it is called a "morning party" must be that it takes place rather late in the afternoon.

These entertainments generally are to be met with a few miles outside of London. After a drive upon a dusty road, under a hot sun, the sensation is agreeable of stepping on to a bright greensward, over which are moving in a graceful and languid manner ladies and gentlemen, dressed in all the colours of the rainbow and of the fashion. Huge, luxuriant chesnut-trees spread out their shadows, which flicker with the glaring sunlight in a dazzling manner over clouds of muslin—the wearers of which stare at one another or talk to one another to the music of the Royal Horse Guards, Red or Blue.

Such is the general character of the morning party; but at this present time a most blessed form of amusement has taken possession of the world, and no fashionable party is complete without the presence of "Aunt Sally." Who that worthy person originally was, and what she did that sticks should be perpetually flung at her head, are questions at present shrouded in mystery. Judging by her complexion, which is as black as it can be painted, one is led to think she comes from the land of Serenaders. A great event it was when first she was introduced into polite society; for besides giving employment to the aristocratic classes, when destitute in the pursuit of pleasure, it has a beneficial effect on the manners, as tending to mitigate stiffness and unnecessary dignity of deportment—a very haughty air being scarcely compatible for any length of time with the act of flinging a succession of sticks at "Aunt Sally's"



BIRD'S-EYE VIEWS OF



A MORNING PARTY. Shewing the Nobility and Ge



Society and Gentry playing the Fashionable Game of the Period.

head. And a swell of great pretensions has been seen to commence playing with a very serious and condescending air, by degrees to warm into it, get excited by repeated failures, then by a lucky stroke to succeed in smashing the old lady's pipe into atoms—and what with the elation consequent on that event, to forget to be affected or important for perhaps ten minutes!

The able inventor of this entertainment knew that when he created "Aunt Sally" he was supplying two great wants of mankind—the appetite for pummelling, and the love of destruction; the first met by the repeated application of the sticks to the "Aunt's" countenance, the second by the occasional annihilation of the pipe which protrudes from her face in the place where her nose ought to be. Hence the popularity of the game.

Opinions will probably continue to be divided as to the relative merits of "Aunt Sally," and the older, but, in some respects, similar "Knock-'em-downs," so long an important feature at every racecourse and fair (three throws a penny). My own view, after considering the matter fully, and making repeated practical experiments, is, that the latter pursuit, at the moment when one, aiming at a pincushion, which is surmounted by a needle-case in the form of a very yellow apple, on the top of which is perched a small wooden doll in an angular and defiant attitude, the whole being nicely poised on the point of a slender stick—that when one lets fly a well-directed shot—that is to say, stick—and sends pincushion, needle-case, and doll flying in different directions—my decided opinion is that the feeling of pride, and gratification, and triumph, is more intense than can be derived from any process in connection with the game of "Aunt Sally."

Those who prefer to "Aunt Sally" the mild quadrille may enjoy that gentle form of exercise under the shade of a marquee; and any one who wishes it may, in another marquee, eat ice or drink tea.

When the sun has sunk behind the trees, and the sultry day has changed to evening, and when to linger in the fresh air and amongst the trees seems desirable, it is time to depart. Every one drives back to town.

Little Mattie.

I.

DEAD! Thirteen a month ago!
 Short and narrow her life's walk.
 Lover's love she could not know
 Even by a dream or talk:
 Too young to be glad of youth;
 Missing honour, labour, rest,
 And the warmth of a babe's mouth
 At the blossom of her breast.
 Must you pity her for this,
 And for all the loss it is—
 You, her mother with wet face,
 Having had all in your case?

II.

Just so young but yesternight,
 Now she is as old as death.
 Meek, obedient in your sight,
 Gentle to a beck or breath
 Only on last Monday! yours,
 Answering you like silver bells
 Lightly touched! an hour matures:
 You can teach her nothing else.
 She has seen the mystery hid
 Under Egypt's pyramid.
 By those eyelids pale and close
 Now she knows what Rhamses knows.

III.

Cross her quiet hands, and smooth
 Down her patient locks of silk,
 Cold and passive as in truth
 You your fingers in spilt milk
 Drew along a marble floor;
 But her lips you cannot wring
 Into saying a word more,
 "Yes" or "no," or such a thing.
 Though you call and beg and wreak
 Half your soul out in a shriek,
 She will lie there in default
 And most innocent revolt.

IV.

Ay, and if she spoke, may be
 She would answer like the Son,
 "What is now 'twixt thee and me?"
 Dreadful answer! better none.

Yours on Monday, God's to-day!
 Yours, your child, your blood, your heart,
 Called . . . you called her, did you say,
 "Little Mattie" for your part?
 Now already it sounds strange,
 And you wonder, in this change,
 What He calls His angel-creature,
 Higher up than you can reach her.

V.

'Twas a green and easy world
 As she took it! room to play,
 (Though one's hair might get uncurled
 At the far end of the day.)
 What she suffered she shook off
 In the sunshine; what she sinned
 She could pray on high enough
 To keep safe above the wind.
 If reproved by God or you,
 'Twas to better her she knew;
 And, if crossed, she gathered still
 'Twas to cross out something ill.

VI.

You, you had the right, you thought,
 To survey her with sweet scorn,
 Poor gay child, who had not caught
 Yet the octave-stretch forlorn
 Of your larger wisdom! Nay,
 Now your places are changed so,
 In that same superior way
 She regards you dull and low
 As you did herself exempt
 From life's sorrows. Grand contempt
 Of the spirits risen awhile,
 Who look back with such a smile!

VII.

There's the sting of 't. That, I think,
 Hurts the most, a thousandfold!
 To feel sudden, at a wink,
 Some dear child we used to scold,
 Praise, love both ways, kiss and tease,
 Teach and tumble as our own,
 All its curls about our knees,
 Rise up suddenly full-grown.
 Who could wonder such a sight
 Made a woman mad outright?
 — Show me Michael with the sword
 Rather than such angels, Lord!

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

Agnes of Sorrento.

CHAPTER V.

IL PADRE FRANCESCO.

THE next morning Elsie awoke, as was her custom, when the very faintest hue of dawn streaked the horizon. A hen who has seen a hawk balancing his wings and cawing in mid air over her downy family, could not have awakened with her feathers, metaphorically speaking, in a more bristling state of caution.

"Spirits in the gorge, quotha?" said she to herself, as she vigorously adjusted her dress. "I believe so,—spirits in good sound bodies, I believe; and next we shall hear, there will be rope-ladders, and climbings, and the Lord knows what. I shall go to confession this very morning, and tell Father Francesco the danger; and instead of taking her down to sell oranges, suppose I send her to the sisters, to carry the ring and a basket of oranges?"

"Ah, ah!" she exclaimed, pausing, after she was dressed, and addressing a coarse print of Saint Agnes pasted against the wall,—"You look very meek there, and it was a great thing, no doubt, to die as you did; but if you'd lived to be married and bring up a family of girls, you'd have known something greater. Please, don't take offence with a poor old woman who has got into the way of speaking her mind freely! I'm foolish, and don't know much,—so, dear lady, pray for me!" And old Elsie bent her knee and crossed herself reverently, and then went out, leaving her young charge still sleeping.

It was yet dusky dawn when she might have been seen kneeling, with her sharp, clear-cut profile, at the grate of a confession-box in a church in Sorrento. Within was seated a personage who will have some influence on our story, and who must, therefore, be somewhat minutely introduced to the reader.

Il Padre Francesco had only within the last year arrived in the neighbourhood, having been sent as superior of a brotherhood of Capuchins, whose convent was perched on a crag in the vicinity. With this situation came a pastoral care of the district; and Elsie and her granddaughter found in him a spiritual pastor very different from the fat, jolly, easy Brother Girolamo, to whose place he had been appointed. The latter had been one of those numerous priests taken from the peasantry, who never rise above the average level of thought of the body from which they are drawn. Easy, gossipy, fond of good living and good stories, sympathetic in troubles and in joys, he had been a general favourite in

the neighbourhood, without exerting any particularly spiritualizing influence.

It required but a glance at Father Francesco to see that he was, in all respects, the opposite of this. It was evident that he came from one of the higher classes, by that indefinable air of birth and breeding which makes itself felt under every change of costume. Who he might be, what might have been his past history, what rank he might have borne, what part played in the great warfare of life, was all, of course, sunk in the oblivion of his religious profession; where, as at the grave, a man laid down name and fame, past history, and worldly goods, and assumed a coarse garb and a name chosen from the roll of the saints, in token that the world that had known him should know him no more.

Imagine a man between thirty and forty, with that round, full, evenly developed head, and those chiselled features which one sees on ancient busts and coins no less than in the streets of modern Rome. The checks were sunken and sallow; the large, black, melancholy eyes had a wistful, anxious, penetrative expression, that bespoke a stringent, earnest spirit, which, however deep might be the grave in which it lay buried, had not yet found repose. The long, thin, delicately formed hands were emaciated and bloodless; they clasped, with a nervous eagerness, a rosary and crucifix of ebony and silver,—the only mark of luxury that could be discerned in a costume unusually threadbare and squalid. The whole picture of the man, as he sat there, had it been painted and hung in a gallery, was such as must have impressed every person of a certain amount of sensibility with the conviction that behind that strong, melancholy, earnest face lay one of those hidden histories of human passion in which the vivid life of mediæval Italy was so fertile.

He was listening to Elsie, as she kneeled, with that easy air of superiority which marks an experienced man of the world, yet with a grave attention which showed that her communication had awakened the deepest interest in his mind. Every few moments he moved slightly in his seat, and interrupted the flow of the narrative by an inquiry concisely put, in tones which, clear and low, had a solemn and severe distinctness, producing, in the still, dusky twilight of the church, an almost ghostly effect.

When the communication was over, he stepped out of the confessional and said to Elsie, in parting,—“ My daughter, you have done well to take this in time. The devices of Satan in our corrupt times are numerous and artful, and they who keep the Lord’s sheep must not sleep. Before many days I will call and examine the child; meanwhile I approve your course.”

It was curious to see the awe-struck, trembling manner in which old Elsie, generally so intrepid and commanding, stood before this man, in his brown rough woollen gown with his corded waist; but she had an instinctive perception of the presence of the man of superior birth, no less than a reverence for the man of religion.

After she had departed from the church, the Capuchin stood lost in thought. To explain his reverie, we must throw some further light on his history.

Il Padre Francesco, as his appearance and manner intimated, was, in truth, descended from one of the most distinguished families of Florence. He was one of those whom an ancient writer characterizes as "men of longing desire." Born with a nature of restless stringency, that seemed to doom him never to know repose, and excessive in all things, he had made early trial of ambition, of war, and of what the gallants of his time called love; plunging into all the dissipations of a most dissolute age, and outing in luxury and extravagance the foremost of his companions.

The wave of a great religious impulse—which in our times would have been called a revival—swept over the city of Florence, and bore him, with multitudes of others, to listen to the fervid preaching of the Dominican monk, Jerome Savonarola; and amid the crowd that trembled, wept, and beat their breasts under those awful denunciations, he, too, felt within himself a heavenly call,—the death of an old life and the uprising of a new purpose.

The colder manners and more repressed habits of modern times can give no idea of the wild fervour of a religious revival among a people so passionate and susceptible to impressions as the Italians. It swept society like a spring torrent from the sides of the Apennines, bearing all before it. Houses were sacked with religious fervour by penitent owners, and licentious pictures, statuary, and books, and the thousand appliances of a luxurious age, were burned in the great public square. Artists convicted of impure and licentious designs threw their palettes and brushes into the expiatory flames, and retired to convents, till called forth by the voice of the preacher, and bid to turn their art into purer and nobler channels. Since the days of Saint Francis no such profound religious impulse had agitated the Italian community.

In our times a conversion is signalized by few outward changes, however deeply the inner life has been stirred; but the life of the Middle Ages was profoundly symbolical, and required the help of material images in the expression of its convictions.

The gay and dissolute young Lorenzo Sforza took leave of the world with rites of awful solemnity. He made his will, disposed of all his worldly property, and assembling his friends, bade them the farewell of a dying man. Arrayed as for the grave, he was laid in his coffin, and thus carried from his stately dwelling by the brethren of the Misericordia, who, in their ghostly costume, with mournful chants and lighted candles, bore him to the tomb of his ancestors; where the coffin was deposited in the vault, and its occupant passed the awful hours of the night in darkness and solitude. Thence he was carried, the next day, almost in a state of insensibility, to a neighbouring convent of the severest order, where, for some weeks, he observed a penitential retreat of silence and prayer, neither seeing nor hearing any living being but his spiritual director.

The effect of all this on an ardent and sensitive temperament can scarcely be conceived; and it is not to be wondered at that the once gay and luxurious Lorenzo Sforza, when emerging from this tremendous discipline, was so wholly lost in the worn and weary Padre Francesco that it seemed as if in fact he had died and another had stepped into his place. The face was ploughed deep with haggard furrows, and the eyes were as those of a man who has seen the fearful secrets of another life. He voluntarily sought a post as far removed as possible from the scenes of his early days, so as more completely to destroy his identity with the past; and he devoted himself with enthusiasm to the task of awakening to a higher spiritual life the indolent, self-indulgent monks of his order, and the ignorant peasantry of the vicinity.

But he soon discovered, what every earnest soul learns who has been baptized into a sense of things invisible, how utterly powerless and inert any mortal man is to inspire others with his own insights and convictions. With bitter discouragement and chagrin he saw that the spiritual man must for ever bear the dead weight of all the indolence and indifference and animal sensuality that surround him—that the curse of Cassandra is upon him, for ever to burn and writhe under awful visions of truths which no one around him will regard. In early life the associate only of the cultivated and the refined, Father Francesco could not but experience at times an insupportable *ennui* in listening to the confessions of people who had never learned either to think or to feel with any degree of distinctness, and whom his most fervent exhortations could not lift above the most trivial interests of a mere animal life. He was weary of the childish quarrels and bickerings of the monks, of their puerility, of their selfishness and self-indulgence, of their hopeless vulgarity of mind, and utterly discouraged with their inextricable labyrinths of deception. A melancholy deep as the grave seized on him, and he redoubled his austerities, in the hope that by making life painful he might make it also short.

But the first time that the clear, sweet tones of Agnes rang in his ears at the confessional, and her words, so full of unconscious poetry and repressed genius, came like a strain of sweet music through the grating, he felt at his heart a thrill to which it had long been a stranger, and which seemed to lift the weary, aching load from off his soul, as if some invisible angel had borne it up on his wings.

In his worldly days he had known women as the gallants in Boccaccio's romances knew them, and among them one enchantress whose sorceries had kindled in his heart one of those fatal passions which burn out the whole of a man's nature, and leave it, like a sacked city, only a smouldering heap of ashes. Deepest, therefore, amongst his vows of renunciation had been those which divided him from all womankind. The gulf that parted him and them was in his mind deep as hell, and he thought of the sex only in the light of temptation and danger. For the first time in his life, an influence serene, natural, healthy, and sweet breathed over him from the mind of a woman—an influence so heavenly and peaceful that he

did not challenge or suspect it, but rather opened his worn heart insensibly to it, as one in a fetid chamber naturally breathes freer when the fresh air is admitted.

How charming it was to find his most spiritual exhortations seized upon with the eager comprehension of a nature innately poetic and ideal ! Nay, it sometimes seemed to him as if the suggestions which he gave her dry and leafless, she brought again to him in miraculous clusters of flowers, like the barren rod of Joseph which broke into blossoms when he was betrothed to the spotless Mary ; and yet, withal, she was so humbly unconscious, so absolutely ignorant of the beauty of all she said and thought, that she impressed him less as a mortal woman than as one of those divine miracles in feminine form of which he had heard in the legends of the saints.

Thenceforward his barren, discouraged life began to blossom with wayside flowers ; and he mistrusted not the miracle, because the flowers were all heavenly. The pious thought or holy admonition that he saw trodden under the swinish feet of the monks he gathered up again in hope: *she* would understand it ; and gradually all his thoughts became like carrier-doves, which, having once learned the way to a favourite haunt, are ever fluttering to return thither.

Such is the wonderful power of human sympathy, that the discovery even of the existence of a soul capable of understanding our inner life often operates as a perfect charm : every thought, and feeling, and aspiration carries with it a new value, from the interwoven consciousness that attends it of the worth it would bear to that other mind ; so that, while that person lives, our existence is doubled in value, even though oceans divide us.

The cloud of hopeless melancholy which had brooded over the mind of Father Francesco lifted and passed away, he knew not why, he knew not when. A secret joyfulness and alacrity possessed his spirits; his prayers became more fervent and his praises more frequent. Until now, his meditations had been most frequently those of fear and wrath—the awful majesty of God, the terrible punishment of sinners ; these he conceived with all that haggard, dreadful sincerity of vigour which characterized the modern Etruscan phase of religion, of which the *Inferno* of Dante was the exponent and the out-come. His preachings and his exhortations had dwelt on that lurid world seen by the severe Florentine, at whose threshold hope for ever departs, and around whose eternal circles of living torture the shivering spirit wanders dismayed and blasted by terror.

He had been shocked and discouraged to find how utterly vain had been his most intense efforts to stem the course of sin by presenting these images of terror : how hard natures had listened to them with only a coarse and cruel appetite, which seemed to increase their hardness and brutality ; and how timid ones had been withered by them, like flowers scorched by the blast of a furnace ; how, in fact, as in the case of those

cruel executions and bloody tortures then universal in the jurisprudence of Europe, these pictures of eternal torture seemed to exert a morbid, demoralizing influence which stimulated the growth of iniquity.

But since his acquaintance with Agnes, without his knowing exactly why, thoughts of the Divine Love had floated into his soul, filling it with a golden cloud like that which of old rested over the mercy-seat in that sacred inner temple where the priest alone was admitted. He became more affable and tender, more tolerant to the erring, more fond of little children ; would stop sometimes to lay his hand on the head of a child, or to raise up one who lay overthrown in the street. The song of little birds and the voices of animal life became to him full of tenderness ; and his prayers by the sick and dying seemed to have a melting power, such as he had never known before. It was spring in his soul,—soft, Italian spring,—such as brings out the musky breath of the cyclamen, and the faint, tender perfume of the primrose, in every moist dell of the Apennines.

A year passed in this way ; perhaps the best and happiest of his troubled life,—a year in which, insensibly to himself, the weekly interviews with Agnes at the confessional became the rallying points around which the whole of his life was formed, and she the unsuspected spring of his inner being.

It was his duty, he said to himself, to give more than usual time and thought to the working and polishing of this wondrous jewel which had so unexpectedly been entrusted to him for the adorning of his Master's crown ; and so long as he conducted himself with the strictest circumspection of his office, what had he to fear in the way of so delightful a duty ? He had never touched her hand ; never had even the folds of her passing drapery brushed against his garments of mortification and renunciation ; never, even in pastoral benediction, had he dared lay his hand on that beautiful head. It is true, he had not forbidden himself to raise his glance sometimes, when he saw her coming in at the church-door and gliding up the aisle with downcast eyes, and thoughts evidently so far above earth, that she seemed, like one of Frà Angelico's angels, to be moving on a cloud, so encompassed with stillness and sanctity that he held his breath as she passed.

But in the confession of Dame Elsie that morning he had received a shock which threw his whole interior being into a passionate agitation which dismayed and astonished him.

The thought of Agnes, his spotless lamb, exposed to lawless and licentious pursuit, of whose nature and probabilities his past life gave him only too clear an idea, was of itself a very natural source of anxiety. But Elsie had unveiled to him her plans for her marriage, and consulted him on the propriety of placing Agnes immediately under the protection of the husband she had chosen for her ; and it was this part of her communication which had awakened the severest internal recoil, and raised a tumult of passions which the priest vainly sought either to assuage or understand.

As soon as his morning duties were over, he repaired to his convent, sought his cell, and, prostrate on his face before the crucifix, began his internal reckoning with himself. The day passed in fasting and solitude.

It is now golden evening, and on the square, flat roof of the convent, which, high-perched on a crag, overlooks the bay, one might observe a dark figure slowly pacing backward and forward. It is Father Francesco; and as he walks up and down, one could see by his large, bright, dilated eye, by the vivid red spot on either sunken cheek, and by the nervous energy of his movements, that he is in the very height of some mental crisis,—in that state of placid ecstasy in which the subject supposes himself perfectly calm, because every nerve is screwed to the highest point of tension and can vibrate no more.

What oceans had that day rolled over his soul and swept his being, as one may see a little boat rocked on the capricious surges of the Mediterranean! Were, then, all his strivings and agonies in vain? Did he love this woman with any earthly love? Was he jealous of the thought of a future husband? Was it a tempting demon that said to him, "Lorenzo Sforza might have shielded this treasure from the profanation of lawless violence, from the brute grasp of an inappreciative peasant, but Father Francesco cannot?" There was a moment when his whole being vibrated with a perception of what a marriage bond might have been that was indeed a sacrament, and that bound together two pure and loyal souls who gave life and courage to each other in all holy purposes and heroic deeds; and he almost feared that he had cursed his vows,—those awful vows, at whose remembrance his inmost soul shivered through every nerve.

But after hours of prayer and struggle, and wave after wave of agonizing convulsion, he gained one of those high points in human possibility where souls can stand a little while at a time, and where all things seem so transfigured and pure that they fancy themselves thenceforward for ever victorious over evil.

As he walks up and down in the gold-and-purple evening twilight, his mind seems to him calm as that glowing sea which reflects the purple shores of Ischia, and the quaint, fantastic grottos and cliffs of Capri. All is golden and glowing; he sees all clear: he is delivered from his spiritual enemies; he treads them under his feet.

Yes, he says to himself, he loves Agnes—loves her all-sacredly as her guardian angel does, who ever beholdeth the face of her Father in heaven. Why, then, does he shrink from her marriage? Is it not evident? Has that tender soul, that poetic nature, that aspiring genius, anything in common with the vulgar, coarse details of a peasant's life? Will not her beauty always draw the eye of the licentious, expose her artless innocence to solicitation which will annoy her and bring upon her head the inconsiderate jealousy of her husband? Think of Agnes made subject to the rude authority, to the stripes and correction, which men of the lower class, under the promptings of jealousy, do not scruple to inflict on their wives! What career did society, as then organized, present to such a

nature, so perilously gifted in body and mind? He has the answer. The Church has opened a career to woman which all the world denies her.

He remembers the story of the dyer's daughter of Siena, the fair Saint Catharine. In his youth he had often visited the convent where one of the first artists of Italy has immortalized her conflicts and her victories, and he had knelt with his mother at the altar where she now communes with the faithful. He remembered how, by her sanctity, her humility, and her holy inspirations of soul, she had risen to the courts of princes, whither she had been sent as ambassadress to arrange for the interests of the Church; and then rose before his mind's eye the gorgeous picture of Pinturicchio, where, borne in celestial repose and purity amid all the powers and dignitaries of the Church, she is canonized as one of those who shall reign and intercede with Christ in heaven.

Was it wrong, therefore, in him, though severed from all womankind by a gulf of irrevocable vows, that he should feel a kind of jealous property in this gifted and beautiful creature? and, though he might not, even in thought, dream of possessing her himself, was there sin in the vehement energy with which his whole nature rose up in him to say that no other man should,—that she should be the bride of Heaven alone?

Certainly, if there were, it lurked far out of sight; and the priest had a case that might have satisfied a conscience even more fastidious: indeed he felt a sort of triumph in the results of his mental scrutiny.

Yes, she should ascend from glory to glory; but *his* should be the hand that should lead her upward. *He* would lead her within the consecrated grating; *he* would pronounce the awful words that should make it sacrilege for all other men to approach her; and yet through life *he* should be the guardian and director of her soul, the one being to whom she should render an obedience as unlimited as that which belongs to Christ alone.

Such were the thoughts of this victorious hour; which, alas! were destined to fade as those purple skies and golden fires gradually went out, leaving, in place of their light and glory, only the lurid glow of Vesuvius.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WALK TO THE CONVENT.

ELsie returned from the confessional a little after sunrise, much relieved and satisfied. Padre Francesco had shown such a deep interest in her narrative that she was highly gratified. Then he had given her advice which exactly accorded with her own views; and such advice is always regarded as an eminent proof of sagacity in the giver.

On the point of the marriage he had recommended delay—a course quite in accordance with Elsie's desire; who, curiously enough, ever since her treaty of marriage with Antonio had been commenced, had cherished

the most whimsical, jealous dislike of him, as if he were about to get away her grandchild from her; and this rose at times so high that she could scarcely speak peaceably to him—a course of things which caused Antonio to open wide his great soft ox-eyes and wonder at the ways of womankind; but he waited the event in philosophic tranquillity.

The morning sunbeams were shooting many a golden shaft among the orange-trees when Elsie returned and found Agnes yet kneeling at her prayers.

"Now, my little heart," said the old woman, when their morning meal was done, "I am going to give you a holiday to-day. I will go with you to the convent, and you shall spend the day with the sisters, and so carry Saint Agnes her ring."

"Oh, thank you, grandmamma! how good you are! May I stop a little on the way, and pick some cyclamen, and myrtles, and daisies for her shrine?"

"Just as you like, child; but if you are going to do that, we must be off soon, for I must be at my stand betimes to sell oranges: I had them all picked this morning while my little darling was asleep."

"You always do everything, grandmamma, and leave me nothing to do: it is not fair. But, grandmamma, if we are going to get flowers by the way, let us follow down the stream, through the gorge, out upon the sea-beach, and so walk along the sands, and go by the back path up the rocks to the convent; that walk is so shady and lovely at this time in the morning, and it is so fresh along by the sea-side!"

"As you please, dearie; but first fill a little basket with our best oranges for the sisters."

"Trust me for that!" And the girl ran eagerly to the house, and drew from her treasures a little white wicker basket, which she proceeded to line curiously with orange-leaves, sticking sprays of blossoms in a wreath round the border.

"Now for some of our best blood oranges!" she said; "old Jocunda says they put her in mind of pomegranates. And here are some of these little ones; see here, grandmamma!" she exclaimed, as she turned and held up a branch just broken, where five small golden balls grew together with a pearly spray of white buds just beyond them.

The exercise of springing up for the branch had sent a vivid glow into her clear brown cheek, and her eyes were dilated with excitement and pleasure; and as she stood joyously holding the branch, while the flickering shadows fell on her beautiful face, she seemed more like a painter's dream than a reality.

Her grandmother stood a moment admiring her.

"She's too good and too pretty for Antonio or any other man; she ought to be kept to look at," she said to herself. "If I could keep her always, no man should have her; but death will come, and youth and beauty go, and so somebody must care for her."

When the basket was filled and trimmed, Agnes took it on her arm.

Elsie raised and poised on her head the great square basket that contained her merchandise, and began walking erect and straight down the narrow rocky stairs that led into the gorge, holding her distaff with its white flax in her hands, and stepping as easily as if she bore no burden.

Agnes followed her with light, irregular movements, glancing aside from time to time, as a tuft of flowers or a feathery spray of leaves attracted her fancy. In a few moments her hands were too full, and her woollen apron of many-coloured stripes was raised over one arm to hold her treasures, while a hymn to St. Agnes, which she constantly murmured to herself, came in little ripples of sound, now from behind a rock, and now out of a tuft of bushes, showing where the wanderer was hid. The song, like many Italian ones, would be nothing in English;—only a musical repetition of sweet words to a very simple and childlike idea, the *bella, bella, bella* ringing out in every verse with a tender joyousness that seemed in harmony with the waving ferns and pendent flowers and long ivy-wreaths from among which its notes issued. “Beautiful and sweet Agnes,” it said, in a thousand tender repetitions, “make me like thy little white lamb! Beautiful Agnes, take me to the green fields where Christ’s lambs are feeding! Sweeter than the rose, fairer than the lily, take me where thou art!”

At the bottom of the ravine a little stream tinkles its way among stones so mossy in their deep, cool shadow as to appear all verdure; for seldom the light of the sun can reach the darkness where they lie. A little bridge, hewn from solid rock, throws across the shrunken stream an arch much wider than its waters seem to demand; for in spring and autumn, when the torrents wash down from the mountains, its volume is often suddenly increased.

This bridge was so entirely and evenly grown over with short thick moss that it might seem cut of some strange kind of living green velvet, and here and there it was quaintly embroidered with small blossoming tufts of white alyssum, or feathers of ferns and maiden’s-hair which shook and trembled to every breeze. Nothing could be lovelier than this mossy bridge, when some stray sunbeam, slanting up the gorge, took a fancy to light it up with golden hues, and give transparent greenness to the tremulous thin leaves that waved upon it.

On this spot Elsie paused a moment, and called back after Agnes, who had disappeared into one of those deep grottos with which the sides of the gorge are perforated, and which are almost entirely veiled by the pendent ivy-wreaths.

“Agnes! Agnes! wild girl! come quick!”

Only the sound of “*Bella, bella Agnella*” came out of the ivy-leaves to answer her; but it sounded so happy and innocent that Elsie could not forbear a smile, and in a moment Agnes came springing down with a quantity of the feathery lycopodium in her hands, which grows nowhere so well as in moist and dripping places.

Out of her apron were hanging festoons of golden broom, crimson

gladiolus, and long, trailing sprays of ivy; while she held aloft in triumph a handful of the most superb cyclamen, whose rosy crowns rise so beautifully above their dark, quaint leaves in moist and shady places.

" See, see, grandmother, what an offering I have! Saint Agnes will be pleased with me to-day; for I believe in her heart she loves flowers better than gems."

" Well, well, wild one; time flies: we must hurry." And crossing the bridge quickly, the grandmother struck into a mossy footpath that led them, after some walking, under the old Roman bridge at the gateway of Sorrento. Two hundred feet above their heads rose the mighty arches, enamelled with moss and feathered with ferns all the way; and below this bridge the gorge grew somewhat wider, its sides gradually receding and leaving a beautiful flat tract of land, laid out as an orange-orchard: the golden fruit was shut in by rocky walls on either side which here formed a perfect hot-bed, and no oranges were earlier or finer.

Through this beautiful orchard the two at length emerged from the gorge upon the sea-sands, where lay the blue Mediterranean swathed in bands of morning mist; its many-coloured waters shimmering with a thousand reflected lights; and old Capri, panting through sultry blue mists, and Vesuvius with his cloud-spotted sides and smoke-wreathed summit, burst into view. At a little distance a boatload of bronzed fishermen had just drawn in a net, from which they were throwing out a quantity of sardines, that leaped and fluttered in the sunshine like scales of silver. The wind blowing freshly bore thousands of little purple waves to break one after another at the foamy line which lay on the sand.

Agnes ran gaily along the beach with her flowers and ivy fluttering from her gay striped apron, and her cheeks flushed with exercise and pleasure, sometimes stopping and turning with animation to her grandmother to point out the various floral treasures that enamelled every crevice and rift of the steep wall of rock which rose perpendicularly above their heads in that whole line of the shore which is crowned with the city of Sorrento: and surely never did rocky wall show to the open sea a face more picturesque and flowery. The deep red cliff was hollowed here and there into fanciful grottos, draped with every varied hue and form of vegetable beauty: here a crevice high in air was all ablaze with purple gillyflower, and depending in festoons above it the golden blossoms of the broom; there a cleft seemed to be a nestling-place for a colony of gladiolus, with its crimson flowers and blade-like leaves; while the silver-frosted foliage of the miller-geranium, or of the wormwood, toned down the extravagant brightness of other blooms by its cooler tints: in some places it seemed as if a sort of floral cascade were tumbling confusedly over the rocks, mingling all hues and all forms in a tangled mass of beauty.

" Well, well!" exclaimed old Elsie, as Agnes pointed to some superb gillyflowers which grew nearly half-way up the precipice. " Is the child

possessed? You have all the gorge in your apron already. Stop looking, and let us hurry on."

After a half-hour's walk, they came to a winding staircase cut in the rock, which led them a zigzag course up through galleries and grottos looking out through curious windows and loopholes upon the sea, till finally they emerged at the old sculptured portal of a shady garden which was surrounded by the cloistered arcades of the Convent of Saint Agnes.

The Convent of Saint Agnes was one of those monuments in which the piety of the Middle Ages delighted to commemorate the triumphs of the new Christianity over the old heathenism.

The balmy climate and paradisiacal charms of Sorrento and the adjacent shores of Naples had made them favourite resorts during the latter period of the Roman empire—a period when the whole civilized world seemed to human view about to be dissolved in the corruption of universal sensuality. The shores of Baiae were witnesses of the orgies and cruelties of Nero and a court made in his likeness, and the palpitating loveliness of Capri became the hotbed of the unnatural vices of Tiberius. The whole of southern Italy was sunk in a debasement of animalism and ferocity which seemed irrecoverable; and would have been so, had it not been for the handful of salt which a Galilean peasant had about that time cast into the putrid, fermenting mass of human society.

We must not wonder at the zeal which caused the artistic Italian nature to love to celebrate the passing away of an era of unnatural vice and demoniac cruelty by creating visible images of the purity, the tenderness, the universal benevolence which Jesus had brought into the world.

Some time about the middle of the thirteenth century, it had been a favourite enterprise of a princess of a royal family in Naples to erect a convent to Saint Agnes, the guardian of female purity, out of the wrecks and remains of an ancient temple of Venus, whose white pillars and graceful acanthus leaves once crowned a portion of the precipice on which the town was built, and were reflected from the glassy blue of the sea at its feet. It was said that this princess was the first lady abbess: be that as it may, it proved to be a favourite retreat for many ladies of rank and religious aspiration, whom ill-fortune in some of its varying forms led to seek its quiet shades, and it was well and richly endowed by its royal patrons.

It was built after the manner of conventional buildings generally—in a hollow square, with a cloistered walk around the inside looking upon a garden.

The portal at which Agnes and her grandmother knocked, after ascending the winding staircase cut in the precipice, opened through an arched passage into this garden.

As the ponderous door swung open, it was pleasant to hear the lulling sound of a fountain, which came forth with a gentle patter like that of soft summer rain, and to see the waving of rose-bushes and golden

jessamines, and smell the perfumes of orange-blossoms mingling with those of a thousand other flowers.

The door was opened by an odd-looking portress. She might be seventy-five or eighty; her cheeks were of the colour of very yellow parchment drawn in dry wrinkles; her eyes were those large, dark, lustrous ones so common in her country, but seemed, in the general decay and shrinking of every other part of her face, to have acquired a wild, unnatural appearance; while the falling away of her teeth left nothing to impede the meeting of her hooked nose with her chin. Add to this, she was hump-backed, and twisted in her figure; and one needs all the force of her very good-natured, kindly smile to redeem the image of poor old Jocunda from association with that of some Thracian witch, and cause one to see in her the appropriate portress of a Christian institution.

Nevertheless, Agnes fell upon her neck and imprinted a very fervent kiss upon what was left of her withered cheek, and was repaid by a shower of those epithets of endearment which in the language of Italy fly thick and fast as the petals of the orange-blossom from her groves.

"Well, well," said old Elsie, "I'm going to leave her here to-day. You've no objections, I suppose?"

"Bless the sweet lamb, no! She belongs here of good right. I believe blessed Saint Agnes has adopted her; for I've seen her smile, plain as could be, when the little one brought her flowers."

"Well, Agnes," said the old woman, "I shall come for you after the Ave Maria." Saying which, she lifted her basket and departed.

The garden where the two were left was one of the most peaceful retreats that the imagination of a poet could create.

Around it ran on all sides the Byzantine arches of a cloistered walk, which, according to the quaint, rich fashion of that style, had been painted with vermillion, blue, and gold. The vaulted roof was spangled with gold stars on a blue ground, and along the sides was a series of fresco pictures representing the various scenes in the life of Saint Agnes; and as the foundress of the convent was royal in her means, there was no lack either of gold or gems or of gorgeous painting.

Full justice was done in the first picture to the princely wealth and estate of the fair Agnes, who was represented as a pure-looking, pensive child, standing in a thoughtful attitude, with long ripples of golden hair flowing down over a simple white tunic, and her small hands clasping a cross on her bosom, while, kneeling at her feet, obsequious slaves and tire-women were offering the richest gems and the most gorgeous robes to her serious and abstracted gaze.

In another, she was represented as walking modestly to school, and winning the admiration of the son of the Roman Praetor, who fell sick—so says the legend—for the love of her.

Then there was the demand of her hand in marriage by the princely

father of the young man, and her calm rejection of the gorgeous gifts and splendid gems which he had brought to purchase her consent.

Then followed in order her accusation before the tribunals as a Christian, her trial, and the various scenes of her martyrdom.

Although the drawing of the figures and the treatment of the subjects had the quaint stiffness of the thirteenth century, their general effect, as seen from the shady bowers of the garden, was of a solemn brightness, a strange and fanciful richness, which was poetical and impressive.

In the centre of the garden was a fountain of white marble, which evidently was the wreck of something that had belonged to the old Greek temple. The statue of a nymph sat on a green mossy pedestal in the midst of a sculptured basin, and from a partially reversed urn on which she was leaning, a clear stream of water dashed down from one mossy fragment to another, till it lost itself in the placid pool.

The figure and face of this nymph, in their classic finish of outline, formed a striking contrast to the drawing of the Byzantine paintings within the cloisters, and their juxtaposition in the same inclosure seemed a presentation of the spirit of a past and present era : the past so graceful in line, so perfect and airy in conception, so utterly without spiritual aspiration or life ; the present limited in artistic power, but so earnest, so intense, seeming to struggle and burn, amid its stiff and restricted boundaries, for the expression of some diviner phase of humanity.

Nevertheless, the nymph of the fountain, different in style and execution as it was, was so fair a creature, that it was thought best, after the spirit of those days, to purge her from all heathen and improper histories by baptizing her in the waters of her own fountain, and bestowing on her the name of the saint to whose convent she was devoted. The simple sisterhood, little conversant in nice points of antiquity, regarded her as Saint Agnes dispensing the waters of purity to her convent ; and marvellous and sacred properties were ascribed to the waters, when taken fasting with a sufficient number of prayers and other religious exercises. All around the neighbourhood of this fountain the ground was one bed of blue and white violets, whose fragrance filled the air, and which were deemed by the nuns to have come up there in especial token of the favour with which Saint Agnes regarded the conversion of this heathen relic to pious and Christian uses.

This nymph had been an especial favourite of the childhood of Agnes, and she had always had a pleasure which she could not exactly account for in gazing upon it. It is seldom that one sees in the antique conception of the immortals any trace of human feeling : passionless perfection and repose seem to be their uniform character. But now and then from the ruins of Southern Italy, fragments have been dug, not only pure in outline, but invested with a strange pathetic charm, as if the calm, inviolable circle of divinity had been touched by some sorrowing sense of that unexplained anguish with which the whole lower creation groans. One sees this mystery of expression in the face of that strange and beautiful

Pysche which still enchanteth the Museum of Naples. Something of this charm of mournful pathos lingered on the beautiful features of this nymph,—an expression so delicate and shadowy that it seemed to address itself only to finer natures. It was as if all the silent, patient woe and discouragement of a dumb antiquity had been congealed into this memorial. Agnes was often conscious, when a child, of being saddened by it, and yet drawn towards it with a mysterious attraction.

About this fountain, under the shadow of bending rose-trees and yellow jessamines, was a circle of garden-seats, adopted also from the ruins of the past. Here a graceful Corinthian capital, with every white acanthus-leaf perfect, stood in a mat of acanthus-leaves of Nature's own making, glossy green, and sharply cut;—there lay a long portion of a frieze sculptured with graceful dancing figures, and in another place a fragment of a fluted column, with lycopodium and colosseum vine hanging from its fissures in graceful draping. On these seats Agnes had dreamed away many a tranquil hour, making garlands of violets, and listening to the marvellous legends of old Jocunda.

In order to understand anything of the true idea of conventional life in those days, we must bear in mind that books were as yet unknown, except as literary rarities, and reading and writing were among the rare accomplishments of the higher classes; and that Italy, from the time that the great Roman Empire fell and broke into a thousand shivers, had been subject to a continual series of conflicts and struggles, which took from life all security. Norman, Dane, Sicilian, Spaniard, Frenchman, and German mingled and struggled, now up and now down; and every struggle was attended by the sacking of towns, the burning of villages, and thrusting out entire populations to utter misery and wretchedness. During these tumultuous ages, those buildings consecrated by a religion recognized alike by all parties, afforded to misfortune the only inviolable asylum, and to feeble and discouraged spirits the only home safe from the prospect of reverses.

If the destiny of woman is a problem that calls for grave attention even in our enlightened times, and if she is too often a sufferer from the inevitable movements of society, what must have been her position and needs in those ruder ages, had not the genius of Christianity opened for her weakness refuges made inviolable by the awful sanctions of religion?

What could they do, all these girls and women together, through the twenty-four long hours of every day, without reading or writing, and without the care of children? Enough: with their multiplied diurnal prayer periods, with each of its chants and ritual of observances,—with the preparation for meals, and the clearing away thereafter,—with the care of the chapel, shrine, sacred gifts, drapery, and ornaments,—with embroidering altar-cloths and making sacred tapers,—with preparing conserves of rose-leaves and curious spiceries,—with mixing drugs for the sick,—with all those mutual offices and services to each other which their

relations in one family gave rise to,—and with divers feminine gossipries and harmless chatterings and cooings, one can conceive that these dove-cots of the Church presented often some of the most tranquil scenes of those convulsive and disturbed periods.

Human nature probably had its varieties there as elsewhere. There were there the domineering and the weak, the ignorant and the vulgar, the patrician and the princess; and though professedly all brought on the footing of sisterly equality, we are not to suppose any Utopian degree of perfection among them. The way of pure spirituality was probably, in the convent as well as out, that straight and narrow one which there be few who find. There, as elsewhere, the devotee who sought to progress faster toward heaven than suited the paces of her fellow-travellers was reckoned a troublesome enthusiast, till she got far enough in advance to be worshipped as a saint.

Sister Theresa, the abbess of this convent, was the youngest daughter in a princely Neapolitan family, who, from her cradle, had been destined to the cloister, in order that her brother and sister might inherit more splendid fortunes and form more splendid connections. She had been sent to this place too early to have much recollection of any other mode of life; and when the time came to take the irrevocable step, she renounced with composure a world she had never known.

Her brother had endowed her with a *livre des heures*, illuminated with all the wealth of blue, and gold, and divers colours which the art of those times afforded,—a work executed by a pupil of the celebrated Frà Angelico; and the possession of this treasure was regarded by her as a far richer inheritance than that princely state of which she knew nothing. Her neat little cell had a window that looked down on the sea,—on Capri, with its fantastic grottos,—on Vesuvius, with its weird daily and nightly changes. The light that came in from the joint reflection of sea and sky gave a golden and picturesque colouring to the simple and bare furniture, and in sunny weather she often sat there, just as a lizard lies upon a wall, with the simple, warm, delightful sense of living and being amid scenes of so much beauty. Of the life that people lived in the outer world—the struggle, the hope, the fear, the vivid joy, the bitter sorrow—Sister Theresa knew nothing. She could form no judgment and give no advice founded on any such experience.

The only life she knew was a certain ideal one, drawn from the legends of the saints; and her piety was a calm, serene enthusiasm, which had never been disturbed by a temptation or a struggle. Her rule in the convent was even and serene; but those who came to her flock from the real world, from the trials and temptations of a real experience, were always enigmas to her, whom she could scarcely comprehend or aid.

In fact, since in convents, as everywhere else, character will find its level, it was old Jocunda who was the real governess of the convent. Jocunda was originally a peasant woman, whose husband had been drafted to some of the wars of his betters, and she had followed his fortunes in

the camp. In the sack of a fortress, she lost her husband and four sons—all the children she had—and herself received an injury which distorted her form; so she took refuge in the convent. Here her energy and *savoir-faire* rendered her indispensable in every department. She made their bargains, bought their provisions, being allowed to sally forth from the convent for these purposes, and formed the medium by which these timid, abstract, defenceless creatures accomplished those material relations with the world with which the utmost saintliness cannot afford to dispense. Besides and above all this, Jocunda's wide experience and endless capabilities of narrative made her an invaluable resource for enlivening any dull hours that might be upon the hands of the sisterhood; and all these recommendations, together with a strong mother-wit and native sense, soon made her so much the leading spirit in the convent, that Mother Theresa herself might be said to be under her dominion.

"So, so," she said to Agnes, when she had closed the gate after Elsie, "you never come empty-handed. What lovely oranges!—worth double any that one can buy of anybody else but your grandmother."

"Yes, and these flowers I brought to dress the altar."

"Ah, yes! Saint Agnes has given you a particular grace for that," said Jocunda.

"And I have brought a ring for her treasury," said Agnes, taking out the gift of the cavalier.

"Holy Mother! here is something, to be sure!" exclaimed Jocunda, catching it eagerly. "Why, Agnes, this is a diamond,—and as pretty a one as ever I saw. How it shines!" she added, holding it up. "That's a prince's present. How did you get it?"

"I want to tell our mother about it," said Agnes.

"You do?" said Jocunda. "You'd better tell me. I know fifty times as much about such things as she."

"Dear Jocunda, I will tell you, too; but I love Mother Theresa, and I ought to give it to her first."

"As you please, then," said Jocunda. "Well, put your flowers here by the fountain, where the spray will keep them cool, and we will go to her."

Boundabout Papers.—No. XIII.

ON A HUNDRED YEARS HENCE.



HERE have I just read of a game played at a country house? The party assembles round a table with pens, ink, and paper. Some one narrates a tale containing more or less incidents and personages. Each person of the company then writes down, to the best of his memory and ability, the anecdote just narrated, and finally the papers are to be read out. I do not say I should like to play often at this game, which might possibly be a tedious and lengthy pastime, not by any means so amusing as smoking a cigar in the conservatory; or even listening to the young ladies playing

their piano-pieces; or to Hobbs and Nobbs lingering round the bottle and talking over the morning's run with the hounds; but surely it is a moral and ingenious sport. They say the variety of narratives is often very odd and amusing. The original story becomes so changed and distorted that at the end of all the statements you are puzzled to know where the truth is at all. As time is of small importance to the cheerful persons engaged in this sport, perhaps a good way of playing it would be to spread it over a couple of years. Let the people who played the game in '60 all meet and play it once more in '61, and each write his story over again. Then bring out your original and compare notes. Not only will the stories differ from each other, but the writers will probably differ from themselves. In the course of the year the incidents will grow or will dwindle strangely. The least authentic of the statements will be so lively or so malicious, or so neatly put, that it will appear most like the truth. I like these tales and sportive exercises. I had begun a little print collection once. I had Addison in his nightgown in bed at Holland House, requesting young Lord Warwick to remark how a Christian should die. I had Cambronne clutching his cocked-hat, and uttering the immortal *la Garde meurt et ne se rend pas.* I had the *Vengeur* going down, and all the crew hurrying like madmen. I had Alfred toasting the muffin; Curtius (Haydon) jumping into the gulf;

with extracts from Napoleon's bulletins, and a fine authentic portrait of Baron Munchausen.

What man who has been before the public at all has not heard similar wonderful anecdotes regarding himself and his own history? In these humble essaykins I have taken leave to egotize. I cry out about the shoes which pinch me, and, as I fancy, more naturally and pathetically than if my neighbour's corns were trodden under foot. I prattle about the dish which I love, the wine which I like, the talk I heard yesterday—about Brown's absurd airs—Jones's ridiculous elation when he thinks he has caught me in a blunder (a part of the fun, you see, is that Jones will read this, and will perfectly well know that I mean him, and that we shall meet and grin at each other with entire politeness). This is not the highest kind of speculation, I confess, but it is a gossip which amuses some folks. A brisk and honest small-beer will refresh those who do not care for the frothy outpourings of heavier taps. A two of clubs may be a good, handy little card sometimes, and able to tackle a king of diamonds, if it is a little trump. Some philosophers get their wisdom with deep thought and out-of-ponderous libraries; I pick up my small crumbs of cogitation at a dinner-table; or from Mrs. Mary and Miss Louisa, as they are prattling over their five o'clock tea.

Well, yesterday at dinner Jucundus was good enough to tell me a story about myself, which he had heard from a lady of his acquaintance, to whom I send my best compliments. The tale is this. At nine o'clock on the evening of the 31st of November last, just before sunset, I was seen leaving No. 96, Abbey Road, St. John's Wood, leading two little children by the hand, one of them in a nankeen pelisse, and the other having a mole on the third finger of his left hand (she thinks it was the third finger, but is quite sure it was the left hand). Thence I walked with them to Charles Boroughbridge's, pork and sausage man, No. 29, Upper Theresa Road. Here, whilst I left the little girl innocently eating a polony in the front shop, I and Boroughbridge retired with the boy into the back parlour, where Mrs. Boroughbridge was playing cribbage. She put up the cards and boxes, took out a chopper and a napkin, and we cut the little boy's little throat (which he bore with great pluck and resolution), and made him into sausage-meat by the aid of Purkis's excellent sausage-machine. The little girl at first could not understand her brother's absence, but, under the pretence of taking her to see Mr. Fechter in *Hamlet*, I led her down to the New River at Sadler's Wells, where a body of a child in a nankeen pelisse was subsequently found, and has never been recognized to the present day. And this Mrs. Lynx can aver, because she saw the whole transaction with her own eyes, as she told Mr. Jucundus.

I have altered the little details of the anecdote somewhat. But this story is, I vow and declare, as true as Mrs. Lynx's. Gracious goodness! how do lies begin? What are the averages of lying? Is the same amount of lies told about every man, and do we pretty much all tell the

same amount of lies? Is the average greater in Ireland than in Scotland, or *vice versa*—among women than among men? Is this a lie I am telling now? If I am talking about you, the odds are, perhaps, that it is. I look back at some which have been told about me, and speculate on them with thanks and wonder. Dear friends have told them of me, have told them to me of myself. Have they not to and of you, dear friend? A friend of mine was dining at a large dinner of clergymen, and a story, as true as the sausage story above given, was told regarding me, by one of those reverend divines, in whose frocks sit some anile chatterboxes, as any man, who knows this world, knows. They take the privilege of their gown. They cabal, and tattle, and hiss, and cackle commininations under their breath. I say the old women of the other sex are not more talkative or more mischievous than some of these. "Such a man ought not to be spoken to," says Gobemouche, narrating the story—and such a story! "And I am surprised he is admitted into society at all." Yes, dear Gobemouche, but the story wasn't true; and I had no more done the wicked deed in question than I had run away with the Queen of Sheba.

I have always longed to know what that story was (or what collection of histories), which a lady had in her mind to whom a servant of mine applied for a place, when I was breaking up my establishment once, and going abroad. Brown went with a very good character from us, which, indeed, she fully deserved after several years' faithful service. But when Mrs. Jones read the name of the person out of whose employment Brown came, "That is quite sufficient," says Mrs. Jones. "You may go. I will never take a servant out of *that* house." Ah, Mrs. Jones, how I should like to know what that crime was, or what that series of villanies, which made you determine never to take a servant out of my house? Do you believe in the story of the little boy and the sausages? Have you swallowed that little minced infant? Have you devoured that young Polonius? Upon my word you have maw enough. We somehow greedily gobble down all stories in which the characters of our friends are chopped up, and believe wrong of them without inquiry. In a late serial work written by this hand, I remember making some pathetic remarks about our propensity to believe ill of our neighbours—and I remember the remarks, not because they were valuable, or novel, or ingenious, but because, within three days after they had appeared in print, the moralist who wrote them, walking home with a friend, heard a story about another friend, which story he straightway believed, and which story was scarcely more true than that sausage fable which is here set down. *O mea culpa, mea maxima culpa!* But though the preacher trips, shall not the doctrine be good? Yea, brethren! Here be the rods. Look you, here are the scourges. Choose me a nice long, swishing, buddy one, light and well-poised in the handle, thick and bushy at the tail. Pick me out a whipcord thong with some dainty knots in it—and now—we all deserve it—whish, whish, whish! Let us cut into each other all round.

A favourite liar and servant of mine was a man I once had to drive

a brougham. He never came to my house, except for orders, and once when he helped to wait at dinner so clumsily that it was agreed we would dispense with his further efforts. The (job) brougham horse used to look dreadfully lean and tired, and the livery-stable keeper complained that we worked him too hard. Now, it turned out that there was a neighbouring butcher's lady who liked to ride in a brougham; and Tomkins lent her ours, drove her cheerfully to Richmond and Putney, and, I suppose, took out a payment in mutton-chops. We gave this good Tomkins wine and medicine for his family when sick—we supplied him with little comforts and extras which need not now be remembered—and the grateful creature rewarded us by informing some of our tradesmen whom he honoured with his custom, “Mr. Roundabout? Lor bless you! I carry him up to bed drunk every night in the week.” He, Tomkins, being a man of seven stone weight, and five feet high; whereas his employer was—but here modesty interferes, and I decline to enter into the avoirdupois question.

Now, what was Tomkins' motive for the utterance and dissemination of these lies? They could further no conceivable end or interest of his own. Had they been true stories, Tomkins' master would still, and reasonably, have been more angry than at the fables. It was but suicidal slander on the part of Tomkins—must come to a discovery—must end in a punishment. The poor wretch had got his place under, as it turned out, a fictitious character. He might have stayed in it, for of course Tomkins had a wife and poor innocent children. He might have had bread, beer, bed, character, coats, coals. He might have nestled in our little island, comfortably sheltered from the storms of life; but we were compelled to cast him out, and send him driving, lonely, perishing, tossing, starving, to sea—to drown. To drown? There be other modes of death whereby rogues die. Good-bye, Tomkins. And so the night-cap is put on, and the bolt is drawn for poor T.

Suppose we were to invite volunteers amongst our respected readers to send in little statements of the lies which they know have been told about themselves—what a heap of correspondence, what an exaggeration of malignities, what a crackling bonfire of incendiary falsehoods, might we not gather together! The letters with respect to the famous table-rapping article would be as nothing compared to the sacks which the staggering postmen would bring to Cornhill. And a lie once set going, having the breath of life breathed into it by the father of lying, and ordered to run its diabolical little course, lives with a prodigious vitality. You say, “*Magna est veritas et prævalebit.*” Psha! Great lies are as great as great truths, and prevail constantly, and day after day. Take an instance or two out of my own little budget. I sit near a gentleman at dinner, and the conversation turns upon a certain anonymous literary performance which at the time is amusing the town. “Oh,” says the gentleman, “everybody knows who wrote that paper: it is Momus's.” I was a young author at the time, perhaps proud of my bantling: “I beg your pardon,” I say, “it was written by your humble servant.” “Indeed!”

was all that the man replied, and he shrugged his shoulders, turned his back, and talked to his other neighbour. I never heard sarcastic incredulity more finely conveyed than by that "indeed." "Impudent liar," the gentleman's face said, as clear as face could speak. Where was Magna Veritas, and how did she prevail then? She lifted up her voice, she made her appeal, and she was kicked out of court. In New York I read a newspaper criticism one day (by an exile from our shores who has taken up his abode in the Western Republic), commenting upon a letter of mine which had appeared in a contemporary volume, and wherein it was stated that the writer was a lad in such and such a year, and, in point of fact, I was, at the period spoken of, nineteen years of age. "Falsehood, Mr. Roundabout," says the noble critic, "you were then not a lad; you were then six-and-twenty years of age." You see he knew better than papa and mamma and parish register. It was easier for him to think and say I lied, on a twopenny matter connected with my own affairs, than to imagine he was mistaken. Years ago, in a time when we were very mad wags, Arcturus and myself met a gentleman from China who knew the language. We began to speak Chinese against him. We said we were born in China. We were two to one. We spoke the mandarin dialect with perfect fluency. We had the company with us; as in the old, old days, the squeak of the real pig was voted not to be so natural as the squeak of the sham pig. O Arcturus, the sham pig squeaks in our streets now to the applause of multitudes, and the real porker grunts unheeded in his sty!

I once talked for some little time with an amiable lady: it was for the first time; and I saw an expression of surprise on her kind face, which said as plainly as face could say, "Sir, do you know that up to this moment I have had a certain opinion of you, and that I begin to think I have been mistaken or misled?" I not only know that she had heard evil reports of me, but I know who told her—one of those acute fellows, my dear brethren, of whom we spoke in a previous sermon, who has found me out—found out actions which I never did, found out thoughts and sayings which I never spoke, and judged me accordingly. Ah, my lad! have I found *you* out? *O risum teneatis.* Perhaps the person I am accusing is no more guilty than I.

How comes it that the evil which men say spreads so widely and lasts so long, whilst our good, kind words don't seem somehow to take root and bear blossom? Is it that in the stony hearts of mankind these pretty flowers can't find a place to grow? Certain it is that scandal is good brisk talk, whereas praise of one's neighbour is by no means lively hearing. An acquaintance grilled, scored, devilled, and served with mustard and cayenne pepper, excites the appetite; whereas a slice of cold friend with currant jelly is but a sickly, unrelishing meat.

Now, such being the case, my dear worthy Mrs. Candour, in whom I know there are a hundred good and generous qualities; it being perfectly clear that the good things which we say of our neighbours don't fructify,

but somehow perish in the ground where they are dropped, whilst the evil words are wafted by all the winds of scandal, take root in all soils, and flourish amazingly—seeing, I say, that this conversation does not give us a fair chance, suppose we give up censoriousness altogether, and decline uttering our opinions about Brown, Jones, and Robinson (and Mesdames B., J., and R.) at all? We may be mistaken about every one of them, as, please goodness, those anecdote-mongers against whom I have uttered my meek protest have been mistaken about me. We need not go to the extent of saying that Mrs. Manning was an amiable creature, much misunderstood; and Jack Thurtell a gallant, unfortunate fellow, not near so black as he was painted; but we will try and avoid personalities altogether in talk, won't we? We will range the fields of science, dear madam, and communicate to each other the pleasing results of our studies. We will, if you please, examine the infinitesimal wonders of nature through the microscope. We will cultivate entomology. We will sit with our arms round each other's waists on the *pons asinorum*, and see the stream of mathematics flow beneath. We will take refuge in cards, and play at "beggar my neighbour," not abuse my neighbour. We will go to the Zoological Gardens and talk freely about the gorilla and his kindred, but not talk about people who can talk in their turn. Suppose we praise the High Church? we offend the Low Church. The Broad Church? High and Low are both offended. What do you think of Lord Derby as a politician? And what is your opinion of Lord Palmerston? If you please, will you play me those lovely variations of, "In my cottage near a wood?" It is a charming air (you know it in French, I suppose? *Ah! te dirai-je, maman!*) and was a favourite with poor Marie Antoinette. I say 'poor,' because I have a right to speak with pity of a sovereign who was renowned for so much beauty and so much misfortune. But as for giving any opinion on her conduct, saying that she was good or bad, or indifferent, goodness forbid! We have agreed we will not be censorious. Let us have a game at cards—at *écarté*, if you please. You deal. I ask for cards. I lead the deuce of clubs. . . .

What? there is no deuce! Deuce take it! What? People *will* go on talking about their neighbours, and won't have their mouths stopped by cards, or ever so much microscopes and aquariums? Ah, my poor dear Mrs. Candour, I agree with you. By the way, did you ever see anything like Lady Godiva Trotter's dress last night? People *will* go on chattering, although we hold our tongues; and, after all, my good soul, what will their scandal matter a hundred years hence?

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